

LETTERS
FROM THE
EAST.

1837-
-1857.

فصل پنجم در بیان
تاریخ و احوال
ایران و هندوستان
از سال ۱۲۵۷ تا ۱۲۸۵

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LETTERS OF H. J. ROSS

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W. J. Ross.
From a drawing by G. F. Watts, R.A. 1867.

LETTERS
FROM THE EAST
BY
HENRY JAMES ROSS

1837-1857

EDITED BY HIS WIFE
JANET ROSS



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

1902
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PREFACE

THE following letters, the first of which were written from the East more than sixty years ago by my husband to his only sister, were found the other day among his old accounts with the Land Transport Corps. Unfortunately there are considerable gaps; most of those from Erzeroom, and all the letters concerning his first visit to Kaisariah are missing. But the vivid descriptions of life in Asia Minor, Turkish Arabia, Syria, and Egypt in bygone days, will recall to many friends how often we have sat spellbound round the octogenarian, listening to tales of pig-sticking on the mounds of Nineveh, of hairbreadth escapes among the Koords, of rides of many hundreds of miles across Asiatic Turkey, and of Pashas and Dereh Beys.

I have here and there linked the letters together with a few words of explanation, and added some notes for readers who are not acquainted with the East, and my husband dictated to me a short account of his youthful days, as an introduction. The proofs were corrected with difficulty during his grievous illness, and I was unable to add anything about his later life. But my niece, Lina Duff Gordon, kindly came to my assistance and completed the book by a short sketch of her uncle as she knew him during the last ten years of his life. It remains for me to thank Lady Layard for permitting

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me to include Mr Ross's letters, chiefly from Mosul, to his old friend Sir A. H. Layard; and Mr Dent for the kindly interest and the care he has taken in the publishing of these records of an eventful life.

JANET ROSS.

POGGIO GHERARDO, FLORENCE.

INTRODUCTION

I WAS born in Malta in 1820, and as a small boy of six was sent to school in England with my brother John (afterwards Admiral J. F. Ross), who was a year younger than myself. For five years we remained with the widow of a clergyman at Great Marlow, who turned Sunday into a real day of penance. After attending church, we poor children had to sit on a wooden bench in the garden without talking or moving, and I have never forgotten my keen sorrow, and the rebellious hatred with which I regarded the mistress when she confiscated my new top, bought only the day before with pocket money so carefully saved, which I could not resist pulling out of my pocket one Sunday afternoon to look at and fondle.

When I was about twelve, Disraeli, accompanied by Mr N. Willis the American author, came from Alexandria to Malta with letters of credit to my father, and presented himself at the office dressed in a silk dressing-gown with a guitar suspended by a broad riband round his neck. My father asked him to dine and to go to the opera afterwards, and we boys were allowed to come down to dessert and to accompany the party to the theatre. Disraeli wore lace ruffles on his shirt-front and his wrist-bands, and his fingers were covered with jewelled rings; so we looked much more at him than at the scene on the stage.

Another quaint figure that I well remember was one of the Knights of Malta, an old man who always dressed in

breeches and silk stockings, a green coat, a wig and a three-cornered hat. He was the last of the Knights of the Order who remained in the Island.

Before I was seventeen I left Malta with my father's friend, Mr James Brant, H.B.M. Consul at Erzeroom, who had suggested that I should enter the consular service. For a year I remained at Trebizond with the Consul, Mr Henry Suter, a partner and subordinate of Mr Brant, who soon summoned me to Erzeroom where I spent four years. In 1842 I again joined Mr Suter at Kaiseriah, and in the following year returned to Malta, where I made the acquaintance of Mr Christian Rassam, a Chaldean, and a native of Mosul: educated at the El-Azhar mosque at Cairo, the missionaries had brought him to Malta to help them with the translation of the Bible into Arabic. Colonel Chesney, who had been a fellow-student of my father's at Woolwich, was then at Malta, and wanted some one to superintend the transport of the segments of the steamboats *Euphrates* and *Tigris* from the Mediterranean coast to Bir on the Euphrates. He consulted my father, who recommended Mr Rassam as possessing a thorough knowledge of Arabic and of English. The service was a difficult one on account of the great weight of the pieces of the boats which had to be carried by camels across the desert, and it required tactful management of the Bedaween. Having accomplished this duty to the satisfaction of the English Government, Rassam was named Vice-Consul at Mosul as a recompense, and there I joined him as commercial partner, and became known throughout the country as a great hunter.

One day a Sheikh of the Djibour Arabs brought me a

horse in wretched condition and evidently very ill; he offered him to me for a small sum as he was convinced he would die. I looked at the horse's eyes and thought I might save him, and after nursing him for six months was rewarded by having the finest horse I ever rode. A red bay, he was called "Merjan," or Coral, and I was soon known—not as Mr Ross, but as the master of the famous red horse. Merjan's fame spread far and wide in the desert, and when pig-sticking one day, a Bedaween rode up to me, saying, he had heard that I possessed a very fine horse and he had come to try his mare, a Kehlany, against him, as he had never yet found her equal. "So be it," I answered, "what trial dost thou want, O Sheikh?" "Let us ride for the first spear," he answered. A pig was soon found, and away we went till the brute turned on a threshing-floor and charged straight at me. Merjan swerved and I feared the Bedaween would get the first spear, when his mare did the same thing. Getting Merjan tight by the head I rode again at the boar and sent my lance through him. "He is a good horse," said my friend, "but if he is as good as they say, let us see who will reach Mosul first." "Certainly," I replied, and together we raced towards the town. I beat him by some distance, and instead of being angry he rode up, salaamed, and exclaimed, "Mashallah! all they say is true, your horse is worthy of his fame." Merjan was a pure Hamdany, a direct descendant of one of the famous mares of the Prophet; a noble horse, as gentle as he was spirited and with paces as easy as a rocking-chair. On leaving Mosul I ceded him to Layard who afterwards let Colonel Kemball, the Hon. East India Co.'s Resident at Baghdad, have him, and there he was pronounced

to be the finest horse that had been seen for thirty years.

I had not been long at Mosul before Layard arrived to make excavations at Tell-Nimrood,¹ about eighteen miles down the river. While with the Bedaween he had observed the mounds and talked about them afterwards to Sir Stratford Canning at Constantinople, who, after Botta's discoveries at Khorsabad, decided to send Layard at his own expense to Mosul to see whether anything was to be found.

The difficulty was to get to the Tell without exciting the suspicions of the Turkish authorities, so I proposed to send my horses and greyhounds there, as though for one of my usual hunting expeditions, while we went down the Tigris on a "kellek"² or raft, carrying food and a pickaxe with us. We landed near a miserable little ruined village, called Naifa, where the horses were waiting, and after coursing a hare or two set to work with the pickaxe, and soon blistered our hands and found the work very exhausting. But the sight of a small row of heads revived our energies, and we dug up the first slab of the great palace of Nimrood. The people about were very poor and only too glad to gain a few piastres by working for Layard; so trenches were soon opened and the Arabs erected for him, what seemed to them a large house, three rooms built of sun-dried bricks made of clay and chopped straw from their threshing-floor. It was run up in a hurry, the bricks were not properly dried,

¹ Nineveh, literally the Hill of Nimrod.

² These rafts are made of poplar trees laid upon inflated goat-skins; the timber is sold at Baghdad, and the skins are sent back to Mosul on camels, to be used again.

and it rained before the roof was on; so when it was inhabited the inside walls were quickly clothed with sprouting barley which, for want of light, grew longer and whiter every day and hung down the walls in fantastic festoons. Here we often sat at night trying to piece bits of inscriptions together; but the greatest puzzle we ever had were strange bits of what seemed to be brittle whitish stone or porcelain. In vain they were turned and twisted, till one night the light fell at an angle on a splinter I had in my hand, and I recognised the waving texture of ivory. These pieces, no doubt, formed part of a throne, some of them had portraits in enamel and gold of a king, others were in the shape of rosettes. When they reached England the chemists at once saw that age had completely destroyed the animal gluten, leaving nothing but the calcareous substance of the ivory, so they boiled the fragments in some glutinous compound, and thus restored what centuries of burial had extracted. I could not leave my business at Mosul for long together, so whenever Layard found anything remarkable he sent a messenger to summon me down to the Tell; and one day as I sat smoking my cigarette and watching the workmen, a troop of irregular cavalry suddenly galloped up, following their greyhounds in pursuit of a gazelle. They pulled their horses up sharp, and threw their arms in the air with exclamations of astonishment at finding Europeans in such a place, and then demanded what we were doing and by whose orders we were digging. On their reporting to the Pasha of Mosul, he sent imperative commands to stop the works. Sir Stratford Canning obtained permissive orders for excavating, but contrary orders were secretly sent, directing the Pasha to appear

to act, not on behalf of the Porte, but in consequence of pressure from the native townspeople. In this way a constant underhand obstruction was kept up throughout, but it was unsuccessful, owing to the dread the Porte had of the "Buyuk Eltchee," or Great Ambassador. Indeed the name of Canning was known throughout the length and breadth of Turkey, and was a terror to evil-doers.

H. J. ROSS.

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THE LETTERS OF
HENRY J. ROSS

1837-1857

SMYRNA, 13th February 1837.

MY DEAR MARY,

We had a very fine passage as far as Tenedos, where we arrived on the 31st, when it began to blow from the N.E., but by beating up we had almost reached the Dardanelles when we were driven back again, and with the greatest difficulty put into Besika Bay, and anchored close under Koum Boroun on the mainland, on the morning of the 1st. That same night it blew a perfect hurricane, and two brigs ahead of us drove far astern; our ship's bows were almost under water with two chain cables out, and it was extremely cold—constantly snowing—and the vapour which rose from the sea was frozen and driven over the water like smoke. Large flocks of geese and ducks passed over us, but it was not until the 7th that Captain Bovill and I could get on shore. The coast of Troas is a large plain intersected with streams, very marshy and almost entirely overgrown with reeds and bulrushes; the rivers and sheets of water were covered with ice, generally strong enough to bear us, but now and then we sank up to our knees in mud and water. We visited the tumuli of Antiochus

and Patroclus which are like little hills, and very steep ones. Here and there are small patches of ground drier than the rest, on which buffaloes, sheep and cattle are fed; the shepherds are almost always armed with a gun and a yattaghan, or knife, and attended by strong and ferocious dogs. On account of the plague the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were encamped in tents on the mountains, which are covered with a dwarf oak, the acorns, or rather the cups of the acorns, of which, are known in commerce as vallonea, and are used in tanning. In the plain were great numbers of duck and snipe, but it is difficult to get within shot of them; however, Captain Bovill shot a teal and I shot a fine drake and a hare, the only one we saw. Going on board, the sea was so rough that the boat was nearly swamped alongside. He is in the Spanish Queen's service, but, being disgusted with it, is going to try for the Turkish. Captain Huggup did all he could to make us comfortable and we were not starved, having fresh meat as far as Tenedos.

The Austrian steamboat *Maria Dorothea* going past us on the 10th, Mr Brant and I got on board of her, and the next morning at 1 A.M. arrived here and repaired to the house of Mr Richard Brant, the British Consul, with whom I am now staying. Smyrna is very dirty, the streets are narrow, ill-paved, and generally have a filthy little ditch on one side; the costumes one sees are pretty, and of all nations. The neighbourhood is not attractive and the roads are very bad; murders and robberies are frequent, but principally amongst the Maltese and the Greeks. An officer of the *Tribune* was robbed on his way to Bujiar (the English Consul's country residence)

about a week ago; and a Greek, who treated some of his acquaintance to coffee, was followed by them and murdered, within a short distance of his own house, for the few dollars he had about him.

I went to-day all over the native town; the bazaars are a continuation of streets covered in, and the shops are merely platforms raised a few feet from the ground. The streets are much worse than those in the Frank quarter, there being only a little footpath on each side large enough for one man to walk on comfortably, and in the middle of the streets is a running stream, generally occupied by long strings of camels. The Governor's palace is a handsome building, as are also the barracks for the troops, who are dressed in a jacket, tight pantaloons and a Greek cap, and some have scales on their shoulders. The Turkish women walk about unattended and have a white veil under the nose that hangs down to their breasts, and a black mask made of wire that covers the upper part of their faces. The men always have a pair of pistols stuck in their girdles and a yattaghan. I visited a bath, and the first room I entered was a dressing-room in which were long tables or platforms, on which I saw two or three Turks dressing; I then passed into another room built in the form of a dome, where the steam is so dense that you cannot see anything clearly at first, and I felt as if I was suffocated—the heat was so great. I must now close, as the boat goes to Constantinople to-day; tell Alick that when at Besika Bay I looked about to see if I could find a tortoise for him, but though there were plenty of dead ones I could not find a live one, as in such cold weather they hide in holes; you may also tell him that I have actually fired a cannon.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 27th February 1837.

MY DEAR MARY,

We arrived here two days ago from Smyrna and I am now with Mr Cartwright, the British Consul-General, but sleep in a lodging. There are not many cases of plague here, but it is amusing to see the fear people have of touching you, laying hold of the tails of their coats and edging past as if a man was made of red-hot iron; on leaving a card at a friend's house the servant takes hold of it with a pair of tongs, and in many houses you are requested to get into a kind of sentry box with a hole to put your head out of, and they smoke you with cypress branches. Carriages here are like long waggons, all gilt and with pretty curtains, and the ladies ride astride as men do. The harbour is beautiful and full of porpoises which are never molested; the Turks having a superstition about them will not allow them to be destroyed. The boats are very pretty, narrow with long peaks and sculptured sides, and the ends of the oars are cut into a crescent; but they are very crank, and in getting into them the foot must be placed well in the middle or else they will upset. The burying-grounds are large and filled with cypress trees, some of the tombs are very handsome and covered with gilt, but in many places there are large holes dug by the dogs who feed upon the bodies; these dogs are just like the wolf in our edition of Buffon, of a light tawny colour. At night they are sometimes dangerous and have severely mauled two or three Europeans.

We go to Trebizond next Thursday week, where by the last accounts the plague was bad; to-morrow we go

to the arsenal to see the models of all the new vessels ; there are a great many line of battle ships and a very large frigate carrying seven two-pounders, said to be the longest ship in the world, she also carries carronades on her upper deck. Yesterday was very wet so that nothing could be seen or done, but to-day it is fine again although there is a great deal of snow about the mountains and a little in the streets.

TREBIZOND, 10th April 1837.

MY DEAR MARY,

I wrote to you as soon as I possibly could on my arrival here. I am most happy and comfortable and everyone is very kind to me. The country is beautiful, though in our immediate neighbourhood it is damp and wet, on account of its being situated at the foot of high mountains from which a number of streams descend and overflow the plain, so at this season it is rather swampy ; we have a great deal of foggy weather and of rain, which is excessively unpleasant. We should be regularly boxed up if there is a war between England and Russia, and are very anxious to hear all we can about the Vixen affair. Mr Brant left this on the 8th for Erzeroom ; I went with him, as did Mr Suter and Stevens, for about three hours out of the town, by which we saw a little of the country which is most beautiful. It will not be long before I join him. The Turks are a most disagreeable set of brutes, exceedingly dirty and idle. They catch porpoises which they strip of the blubber and then leave within two or three yards of their own doors, till they are

devoured by the wild dogs and the crows; they do the same with the herrings, the heads of which they cut off before salting and throw in a heap before their houses, and leave to putrify sooner than carry them away.

Trebizond is anything but a neat town, which is a thing not to be found in the whole Turkish Empire; but the country in the vicinity is lovely, and reminds me more of England than any place I have as yet seen. The mountains are very high and covered with wood, and the banks are studded with a great variety of wild flowers, among which are my old friends the primroses and violets, and in our leisure hours we manage to amuse ourselves well with riding and shooting.

TREBIZOND, 25th April 1837.

MY DEAR MARY,

I received your letter of the 29th March. Do tell Alick that anything in the shape of a letter from him will be very welcome; I want to hear how the partridges, dogs, etc., are getting on. There is little of interest here to mention; we are always looking out for news from Malta or Constantinople, so that any political or commercial news is acceptable. Our society is limited; we go now and then to the French Consulate, a rickety barn-looking edifice, to spend the evening, play *ecarté* and talk nonsense.

To show you the difference of climate between this place and Malta, I have only to say that the vines, figs, and other trees are only just bursting their buds, and it

will be three weeks before we have green peas, strawberries, beans, etc.; the fruit trees are in full bloom, and although the country is beautiful even now, being covered with azaleas, rhododendrons, and the large blue iris in full flower, it will be still more so when the woods are in leaf. On the 20th, we had a total eclipse of the moon, lasting for about two hours. I had just got into bed when I heard Mr Suter calling out "Harry," and jumped up in a great hurry to see what he wanted, when he came and told me there was an eclipse. I believe we were the only people who witnessed it, at least among the Europeans.

We have a large cock, cross-bred between the Sinope and the Herat breeds and about the size of a common turkey; he is kept in the courtyard, and sleeps under a board close to our drawing-room window. The other night we were surprised by hearing a great noise and screaming, and ran out fearing that he had been seized by a jackal or a fox. But nothing was to be seen of the poor cock, only a loud scream was heard up in the air, so we went in again as it was evident he had been carried off by an owl (the large horned kind, they stand two and three feet high and are very powerful); our dragoman, who had spent the evening with us, on returning home found our cock in the street a short distance from the house, with only the loss of a few feathers and a scratch or two on his back.

ERZEROOM, 2nd December 1838.

DEAR MARY,

The cold here is intense. We have seen nothing but snow since the first week in November, the ink

freezes as I write, the water in my jug has thick ice on it every morning, and as I dry my hands after washing them in hot water the towel becomes stiff. The thermometer goes down to 52 degrees of cold (Fahrenheit), so the wolves are starving, and every night we hear the despairing shrieks of wretched dogs which have been seized and carried off by them. Forty or fifty dogs sleep all huddled up together in their own particular quarter of the town, and a perpetual struggle goes on all night long as to which can get undermost; while the outside ones moan and complain of the bitter cold. The colder the night the more one hears them cry. The wolves become extraordinarily bold from sheer hunger, and when Colonel Sheil, brother to the famous orator, Lalor Sheil, was here with the whole of the mission from Persia, one of the suite was just going to bed when the servant rushed in and said there was a wolf at the foot of the staircase. The man did not believe it, but went to see, and there stood a wolf glaring at him. He ran for his gun, followed the beast into the street and fired, but missed him. I saw one close to the town near the ruined Russian redoubts, built by Paskewitch, and ran after him as fast as I could, got into a drift of soft snow, went head over heels and lost my wolf.

I believe Erzeroom is the highest inhabited spot in Asia Minor (6000 feet above the sea), and the villages round, as elsewhere in Armenia, are buried underground on account of the cold. To get to the living rooms one has to pass through the cattle stables, which have double doors, and heavy wadded curtains to prevent the rush of frozen air.

In summer a luxuriant crop of grass grows on the flat

roofs of the houses, and everyone tethers lambs on them. Out of the middle of the grass rise what look like small, white, pointed tents; these are the skylights of the buried houses, made of oiled paper as glass is too expensive.

You would not recognise me in my riding costume; a fur cap with flaps tied down over my ears, a fur jacket and fur gloves made like a baby's without fingers, so that we have to knot our reins and ride with both hands, or rather fists, if the horses are fresh. I nearly lost my life the other day by foolishly going out after partridges, just as a "Tepi" or *tourmente* was beginning. It increased in violence, and I could not see for the blinding frozen snow which drove against my face, so I got off the track and lost my way in the vast expanse of whiteness. After floundering about for hours, often up to my waist in the soft snow, I recognised a small ridge of earth which had been stripped of snow for a minute by the high wind, and got back to town half frozen.

A storm has been raging for some hours and minute guns are booming from the citadel, as a caravan left at daylight this morning on its way to Persia. Small parties of horsemen are leaving the town every ten minutes, in order to form a sort of chain along the road to the hills of Deveh-Bouyounou (the Camel's Neck), in the hopes of reaching the tail of the long line of animals and bringing them safe back. If they do not succeed in finding and rescuing the caravan, the bodies of men and animals will not be found till the spring, when the thaw sets in. It sometimes happens that a party of horsemen miss the track of those who are in front of them, and get lost in the deep snow, as well as the caravan they went out to find.

Post is just going and this moment we hear that the caravan has been brought back, but minus all the loads, which were cast off and left behind in the snow, and several men and animals.

ERZERROOM, 30th July 1839.

DEAR MARY,

We have had an exciting time here and I have seen a wonderful sight—the entry of the last of the great Dereh Beys, or hereditary mountain chieftains. But I must “begin at the beginning” as we used to say, and tell you that two regiments of “redifs,” who as usual have not been paid for months, conspired to rebel and sack the town. In Turkey everything is known in the coffee-houses at least three days before it happens, so the Governor heard of their intention, and was so thoroughly alarmed that he sent and asked Kiour Houssein Bey, chief of the Adjarah Lazees, a wild hill tribe who are the terror of the whole district, to come to his assistance. Meanwhile everyone prepared for defence, as a proclamation had been issued bidding the merchants protect themselves as best they could. The two Consulates of England and Russia are at the opposite end of the town from the palace, and our janissary, who had been sent out to obtain news, returned saying that about two thousand “redifs” were on the point of attacking the palace and the consulates, which they intended to burn, while they looted the bazaars to pay themselves. We, in the English Consulate, prepared to defend ourselves by raising the parapet wall of our flat roof

with stones and mattresses and barricading the windows, and settled to keep watch alternately on the roof with loaded guns ready. Night was just falling, my watch was over and I was thinking of going to bed, when my friend, looking scared, called out in a shaky voice, "I say, Ross, do me the favour to remain with me." So I sat down and we listened. All at once we heard bang, bang, bang-bang-bang at the other end of the town, followed by the barking of the wild street dogs and the screaming of women. The shots came nearer and nearer and then a noise of people running; all at once the rabble swept rapidly past the house without attacking us, and we could not understand what had happened.

Then the janissary, who had been sent out again to glean what news he could, came in, and we heard that the "redifs" had marched to the palace and that the Governor, who was not possessed of the usual courage of the Turks, had fled for safety into his hareem where he hoped not to be followed; but that a young Georgian renegade had run out two small field-pieces under the vaulted entrance of the courtyard of the palace, which was high and wide enough to allow laden camels to pass through. He stood over his cannon, facing the rebels, lighted match in hand, and shouted, "I'll let you come up to the muzzles and then I'll blow you all to perdition." Staggered by such a reception, the men wavered one moment and then broke in confusion, and as they rushed away the inhabitants fired down upon them from the roofs. Thoroughly cowed the mutineers threw away their muskets and dispersed to their villages, strewing all

the country round with their arms. Next day, to the consternation of all the town, Kiour Houssein Bey arrived, more dreaded by far than the rebellious regiments, for Erzerroom was entirely undefended and lay at his mercy.

I was on the roof and saw his entry. Five hundred of his mounted retainers opened the procession, then came eight or ten singing boys chanting, like David before the Ark, the praises of the mighty Dereh Bey and lauding his prowess in war when he scattered his enemies like chaff before the wind. These were followed by another troop of boys, dancing and posturing before his horse. Kiour Houssein Bey's sleeves swept the ground as he sat immovable on his fine arab, surrounded by all the notables of the town, who had gone forth to meet him, while the three hundred riflemen in his train fired wildly to the right and to the left without any regard as to the consequences. All at once his favourite henchman fell, struck between the shoulders by a bullet. He was carried into a house and laid on a divan, and sent for his master. "I am dying," he said, "one favour I ask of you." "It is granted," answered the Bey. "Don't touch the man who shot me," gasped the dying man. Kiour Houssein Bey bent his head in assent and kept his word, and what is more extraordinary, quitted Erzerroom without plundering the bazaars. He is noted for his rapacity and brutality, and the whole country trembles before him; if he hears of a pretty girl he sends his people out to bring her to him, and when he is tired of her he sends her back to her parents. An unfortunate Armenian tobacconist had in some way offended him

and fled some twenty years ago, he thought that after such a lapse of time he would not be recognised, and returned to his village. But Kiour Houssein met him one day and said "you are so and so"; trembling and imploring mercy the wretched man threw himself at the feet of the Bey who just waved his hand and said "parallai" (cut him to pieces), and cut to pieces he was—*instantly*.¹

[In 1843 Mr Ross returned to Malta to see his father and it was then arranged that he was to enter into partnership with Mr Christian Rassam at Mosul. Baron Schack, who is mentioned in the following letter, he had met at Rome some ten years before, when the two lads made excursions together. Baron Schack's name will be known to some of my readers as the patron of Herr Lenbach, who was sent by him to Italy to copy the Baron's favourite pictures. His gallery was left to the Emperor of Germany, I believe, who gave it to the town of Munich.]

¹ Orders at length came from the Porte that this state of things must be put a stop to, and the famous Hafiz Pasha, who lost the battle of Nezeeb, was sent against the Bey. It was agreed that Kiour Houssein with six of his retainers was to meet Bahree Pasha, Governor of Kars and brother to Hafiz Pasha, with six of his Circassians in a valley midway between the two armies, to treat about peace. Bahree Pasha received the chief with great courtesy, but he had given secret orders to his Circassians, and while talking, he suddenly drew his pistol and fired at Kiour Houssein. The Circassians at once fell upon him and a desperate fight ensued, but the Bey's men did not dare to fire because their master and Bahree's men were all mixed up together. He was taken prisoner with a broken leg, and sent to the Bagnio at Constantinople; there one day the overseer spoke roughly to him and Kiour Houssein seized a stone and smashed the man's head. He was cut to pieces by the guards, and thus ended the last of the great independent Dereh Beys of Turkey.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 12th May 1844.

MY DEAR MARY,

Having a little leisure time I will send you a line or two. My time here has been occupied from nine in the morning till six in the evening with visiting people and sightseeing. I have already mentioned that I found Baron Schack as friendly as ever, and through him I got leave to accompany the Grand Duke to see the mosque of St Sophia. Unfortunately I was told that the Grand Duke would visit the mosque at eleven, after going over the Turkish Barracks at Scutari. So of course I was there, and had to wait three hours for him, he in the meanwhile having gone over the Serai, a sight of which I thus lost. When he did come he was followed by such a mass of people, who had not obtained permission and with whom he had been so much annoyed in the Serai, that very shortly after he got into the mosque the Cawasses received orders to close the door and exclude the rest of the crush, and I was amongst the number; however, having an active *valet de place*, he talked over the guard and I got in and saw the inside of the famous building, with which I was the more struck from having been told that I should be much disappointed. It is a magnificent structure, richly ornamented with columns of all kinds of marbles; the dome from being very slightly concave does not present the same striking appearance as that of St Peter, but as a whole I was delighted. From that we went to the Barracks of the Seraskier; the Grand Duke, to shake off the crowd, went through the streets at a gallop, but my

valet de place obtained horses for Mr Halliday and myself immediately, and we dashed over the pebbly streets as hard as our horses could lay leg to ground and got up to them, and Schack having advised me to stick close to him I did so, and saw everything. These barracks are the finest I have ever seen, immensely spacious with plenty of air and light, and everything astonishingly clean; indeed they were almost too fine for the purpose for which they are intended. They occupy four sides of a large quadrangle and possess a very nice mosque within the precincts. The troops were ranged up in line all round the extensive apartment with their arms piled on open spaces in the centre of the room. The kitchen was in marble with an English steam apparatus for cooking, and judging by the very savoury odour issuing from the boilers, Turkish troops fare not badly. After we had gone over the armoury, etc., we were shown into a fine room with windows giving out into the square and saw 3000 men manœuvre with great credit. You may fancy the size of these barracks when I tell you that this number of men scarcely made any show; a very large number indeed might go through their exercises without crowding the place at all. After this the Grand Duke went away, and Mr Halliday and I galloped round the walls of the city and went through the different quarters visiting the tombs of the various Sultans, most of them are beautiful, but especially that of the last Sultan Mahmoud, built of white marble with large windows protected by a gilded iron railing through which can be seen the tomb of the Sultan and of several of his family. The floor is covered with Persian carpets, and the tomb itself is of silver and mother-of-pearl, and

over it rich Cashmere shawls are spread, at the head is his fez with a plume of heron feathers, and an aigrette in diamonds. It is better than our plan in one respect—that it is not so gloomy. Attached to the building is a very pretty garden. I then rode to Therapia with Hascott to see Mrs Hanson, and felt a different man when galloping over green turf on the undulating downs which lie at the back of Constantinople. As we approached Therapia the little ravines deepened into precipitous valleys overgrown with heath, may, laurel and arbutus, with a clump of plane and elm trees here and there; picturesque little gay painted Turkish houses surrounded by fruit trees in full bloom appeared at rare intervals, but the greatest portion of the land remains in its wild state. That the land is not cultivated in the immediate neighbourhood of so large a city is to me quite inexplicable; in the wild parts of the East I have been in, this is not surprising, but here there seems to be no reason for such neglect. Therapia is a pretty little village built on the edge of the Bosphorus, and stretching up a steep hill which rises immediately from the water's edge. Mr Hanson has a most delightful garden attached to his house, and one of its chief ornaments is a fine avenue of horse-chestnuts, a tree of which I have been always fond. The ride there and back was about twenty-four miles so that it took up a whole day. I have also been to hear the howling dervishes at Scutari, and a more stupid exhibition I never before witnessed. It consists only of chanting out the attributes of God in a loud voice which gradually increases to its fullest power, at the same time rocking themselves sideways and backwards and forwards as violently as possible, so as to shake out the long tail of hair the

Mussulmans wear, and let it fly about over their head and shoulders to give them a wild appearance. In fact they look like so many madmen. The dancing dervishes are seen without any trouble and there is nothing disgusting in the spectacle; it consists of a kind of waltzing step accompanied by a kettledrum and fife, and gives one an opportunity of judging of the solemn music of the Turks—their light music can be heard in every public place on Sundays and Fridays.

I have not bought the lamps as I had a regular rogue of a valet. All these fellows take strangers to particular shops and upon everything bought get a handsome brokerage, so the stranger has not only to pay the rascals a dollar a day but a great deal more upon every little purchase; old Mr Halliday gets out of all patience with these rogues. They won't take him where he wants to go—they say it is three hours off for instance when perhaps it may be close by, because it does not suit them—and with me the fellows are sulky because, speaking Turkish, I can make bargains myself, and when horses are engaged, etc., from knowing every word spoken they cannot take us in.

I asked Mr Smith¹ to introduce me to the Ambassador² and he took me there three different times; the first, H.E. was engaged with the French Ambassador, the second, he was unwell, and the third, too much occupied, but said the best way would be for me to come with Mr Smith to dine, which I did yesterday. At table I sat next to him. Besides the attachés and Lady Canning the party only consisted of Mr and Mrs Smith and one of the French attachés. I did not say much to H.E.

¹ Architect of the British Embassy.

² Sir Stratford Canning.

during dinner but spoke chiefly with Mr Wood, and during the evening principally with Todd and Doria. However, when most of the people were gone away Sir Stratford came up to me and said he wished to have a moment's conversation and took me into another room. He said I was going to a very interesting country, asked me when I intended leaving, and whether I was going direct. I told him I was going on the 15th and should go straight, and offered my services in case H.E. had anything to send. He said that was rather soon but he would see, and then enquired about the trade of Mosul and whether I was any connection of Mr Rassam? I told him what I knew and we spoke on the Turkish system of Government, manufacture of cloths, etc., and he finished by asking whether it would be inconvenient for me to remain on another week? To which I of course answered, that if H.E. wished I was ready to wait for another steamer, and that the delay would make no difference to me. He said that had another steamer been leaving on Friday, as used to be the case till very lately, he would ask me to remain, but as it was he would be sorry to create so long a detention, and asked, "have you engaged your passage?" I said, "No," that I was to do so next day. He said, "Very well, will you put it off till you hear from me?" I answered, certainly, and that if H.E. would permit me, I would call next day at any hour that would be most agreeable; and I am to go to-day at two o'clock, when I shall get a decisive answer. I think that in such a case I should have been more than mad to have gone when I had a chance of interesting the Ambassador in my favour. In all other respects I have seen and done all I had to do—beat up for correspondents

THE SWEET WATERS OF EUROPE 19

likely to consign or give orders for produce, looked over samples with Hanson and am taking a large quantity with me.

The weather during the last few days having been very rainy and puddly the Hallidays have not been able to see the Suleimanieh mosque, which is the finest piece of Turkish architecture known, and as I was to have accompanied them this was a bore. Yesterday I took a ride with Hascott to the Sweet Waters of Europe; it was one of the prettiest sights I have ever beheld, very soft, gay and lively. Suppose a little stream some twenty feet wide with a fine row of ash trees on either bank, a road leading under their shade, and a small valley, covered with meadow and corn land, yellow and blue with wild flowers. On this green tents and awnings, quantities of brilliantly coloured and gilded "arahbahs" or waggons, drawn by white oxen or horses, and filled with Turkish "Khanums"¹ and Greek "Coconas,"¹ an European carriage or two, numbers of horsemen dashing about, led horses fighting and neighing, groups of gipsy women playing to amuse the Turks as they sit comfortably on their carpets smoking fragrant pipes and drinking coffee, with jugglers, dancing monkeys and musicians perambulating among the different groups, seeking a para or two in return for their exertions, all this shut in by gently swelling hills, and you have the Sweet Waters of Europe.

16th May 1844.—I have received the various letters from Malta by *Devastation*, and remain here detained till next Tuesday, as the Ambassador told me he could not get his despatches ready in time; he said it was

¹ Ladies.

scarcely fair asking me to remain so long, as although he wished to send letters by me, yet they were not of sufficient importance to pay my expenses. "However, Mr Ross," he added, "you understand that it is not I who am doing you a favour but you to me, and you will always get the credit of bearing despatches, besides which I will get you a firman from the Porte."

I leave this on the 21st and you may consider that I shall arrive in Mosul fifteen days after, as I shall go as fast as I can. I cannot tell you how kind the Hallidays have been to me, they ask me to accompany them everywhere, and Mr Halliday says he has good interest at home, and anything he can do for me he will. I told him that a friend was interesting himself for me with Sir Stratford Canning and asked him to back it up if he could. When I went to tell them that I was to remain another week they were quite delighted, and Mrs Halliday observed that that would set her husband up again, he having been a little unwell.

Inshallah! my remaining another week at Sir Stratford's request may also dispose him in my favour, particularly if I carry on the correspondence with him to his satisfaction. As I dine constantly with the Hallidays I have made the acquaintance of Sir Edward Pearson, who was very much interested with what I was able to tell him of the Nestorian Christians, and said it was likely that he would enter into a correspondence with me regarding them as soon as he knows that I shall be residing close to them.

You don't know what a difference there is in the climate here and at Malta; I find it so cold now (about seven in the morning) that I am almost shivering while

writing, and the weather looks anything but smiling. The numbers of birds about this place is quite astonishing, the gulls are as tame as farm-yard ducks, and the burying-grounds and mosques abound with turtle-doves that come flying down about me much as the pigeons did in Malta. My bedroom window overlooks the gardens of the old English Palace which, as everywhere else here where there are trees, abounds in nightingales, and their song is the last thing I hear when going to bed.

MOSUL, 10th June 1844.

DEAR MARY,

Here I am at Mosul¹ chief city of the Pashalik of that name, on the western bank of the Tigris nearly opposite the mounds which cover the remains of Nineveh, and the mausoleum of Nebbi Yunus, or the Prophet Jonah, a place of great sanctity among the Mohammedans. The battlemented walls of the city about three miles in circumference are fast falling to decay, four gates on the eastern side lead towards the river, and six others are in the wall that runs from north to south on the desert side.

A most extraordinary thing happened here one day, the guard at the north gate sounded the alarm, and like

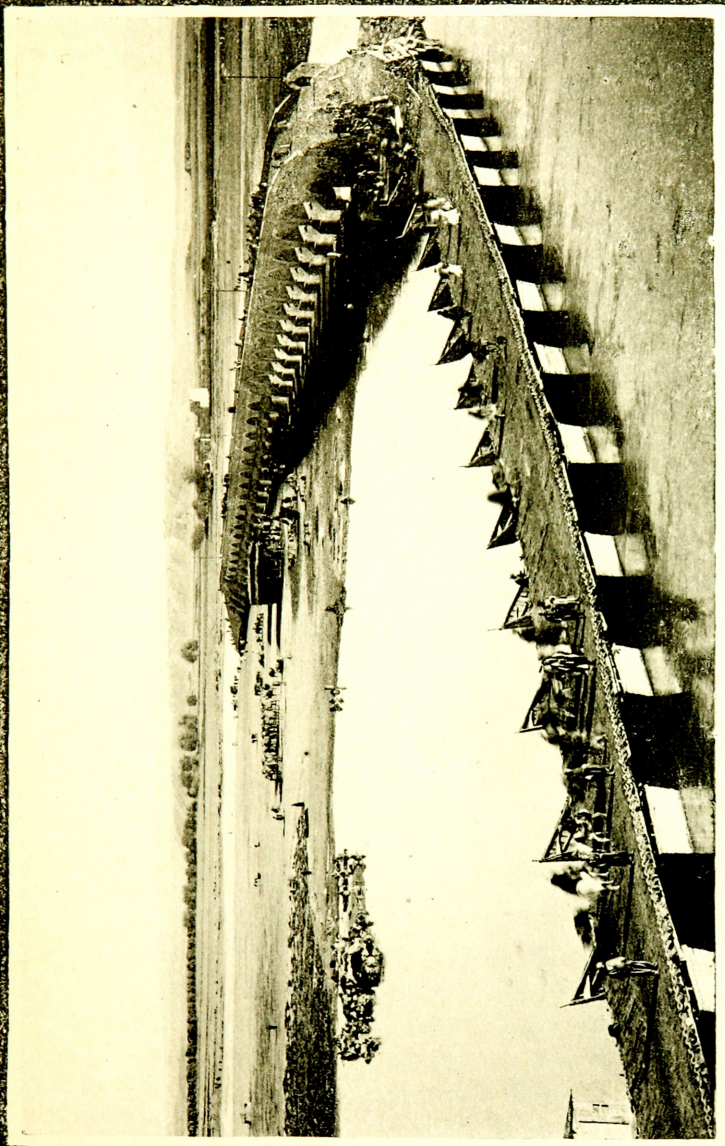
¹ Mespila, or Μεσ-πυλαι, "central gates," etc., named, we presume, by the Greeks from being midway between the Persian Gulf, the Euxine, the Mediterranean, and the Caspian Seas. The term, after Alexander's conquest, soon became converted into Muspil and Musvil, to be further corrupted into the Arabicised Mosul, after the Mohammedan conquest. See "Bombay Government Records," No. XLIII., New Series.

a whirlwind a large troop of wild boar rushed through the town, scattering everybody they met like chaff before them; they tore through the narrow bazaars, upsetting sweat-meat sellers and fruit and water vendors and, as though possessed of the devil, precipitated themselves down the city wall about sixty feet high and were all killed or maimed. It was supposed they had met a lion and losing in their terror all fear of man, had dashed straight through the town.

The Tigris is crossed in summer by a bridge of boats, replaced, when the river is swollen by winter floods, by a clumsy and queerly constructed ferry-boat, large enough to carry several horses. It is a singular sight to watch the great river turtles float down the stream; they are a god-send to the Dominican monks, who boast that no one could tell their turtle cutlets from veal, pork, or chicken, according to the way they are cooked, so during Lent they fare sumptuously.

The origin of Mosul is lost in the mist of ages. It was certainly a flourishing city before the Mohammedan invasion, probably a suburb of Nineveh "that exceeding great city of three days journey," denounced by the Hebrew Prophets for its luxury and magnificence, which was destroyed by the Medes and Babylonians about B.C. 606. The mounds covering the ruins of Nineveh are my favourite hunting-grounds and many an exciting gallop shall I have after gazelles and wild boars, riding hard for the first spear.

In the days of the Arabian Khalifat, Mosul sent large armies against the Crusaders. She was also celebrated for her colleges and for the learning of her Ulemahs, or Doctors of the Law. This prosperity continued with



BRIDGE AT MOSUL

slight interruptions until the great famine of 1827, when the measure of wheat (equal to about 24 lbs.) rose from threepence to eighteen shillings. This famine lasted two years, and was followed by the plague which swept away thousands of the inhabitants.

MOSUL, 20th October 1844.

DEAR MARY,

Last week I visited Paul Botta, son of the famous Italian historian, at Khorsabad, where he is excavating. He is quite a Frenchman, as he was educated at Paris for a doctor, and sent round the world on a botanical mission by the "Jardin des Plantes." We are great friends in spite of his violent denunciations of England, which entirely depend on how much opium he has taken. He has once or twice alarmed M. de Bourqueney, the French Ambassador at Constantinople, by wonderful stories about our intrigues at Baghdad; his next despatches by the Tatar fortnightly post were anxiously waited for, and when they arrived there was not a word about "la perfide Albion," so finally M. de Bourqueney came to the conclusion that Botta must be mad; he is, however, strongly supported by M. Mohl, so that I dare say nothing will be done to him.

There has been a great disturbance here, which might have ended badly for all the Europeans, and also for the native Christians, thanks to my friends the Dominican monks. They wanted to buy a larger house, and charged Hodggia Hanna, the French dragoman, a Chaldean, to find one. Now Hodggia Hanna had a debtor, a Mussulman, who owned a house just suited to the Dominicans, and

he promised the man that if he would sell it the monks would pay a price high enough to clear him of debt and buy another house. The man consented, the sale was concluded, and Padre Vallerga, head of the Propaganda Fede at Baghdad, came to install the monks in their new abode. The man, acting in good faith, made over his house and asked the dragoman to show him the new house so that his family might go there. Hodggia Hanna declared that he had been unable to find one, and suggested that he should take rooms in the house of some friend. The Mussulman, feeling he had been duped, went to the mosque and called aloud: "Oh people! see how the infidel dogs treat a true believer." Whereupon the Mollahs mounted the pulpits in the various mosques and incited the Mussulmans to revenge themselves upon the Christians. The people rushed to the convent, and Padre Vallerga came out upon a low terrace and taunted them about a reported introduction of arms by the French Ambassador, M. de Sartiges, who was on his way to Teheran. When M. de Sartiges and Botta heard what was going on, they mounted their horses and went to the Serai to demand the immediate protection of the Pasha for the monks. On their way through the narrow streets the women crowded on the flat roofs and showered down stones upon them, uttering the shrill "Telehl" (the Hallelujah of the Bible) to incite and infuriate the men. M. de Sartiges, finding this unpleasant, quietly turned round to his French valet, who had followed him, and said "Jean mets toi derrière moi," so that Jean received the stones destined for his master.

The leading Mohammedans, seeing that things were becoming serious, had closed round Padre Vallerga to

protect him, when one of the crowd stretched over the shoulder of a Mollah and struck at him with a khangiar. Seeing the glint of steel the Padre bent forwards and instead of his head the blade caught his neck and ran down the spine. At this moment the Pasha arrived with troops, Vallerga was rescued, carried in, and placed upon a bed. Dr Grant, the American missionary, who is a physician, came to him and opened the wound to its whole length with a bistouri to prevent evil consequences. I saw him lying on the bed, his face deadly pale and contrasting strongly with his long jet-black beard. During the height of the tumult, Jeejawy, one of the leading Mohammedans of the city came to the English Consulate and told us we had nothing to fear, as he would in case of danger, throw fifty musketeers into our courtyard. The affair has been referred to Constantinople and I am curious to know how it will be settled.¹

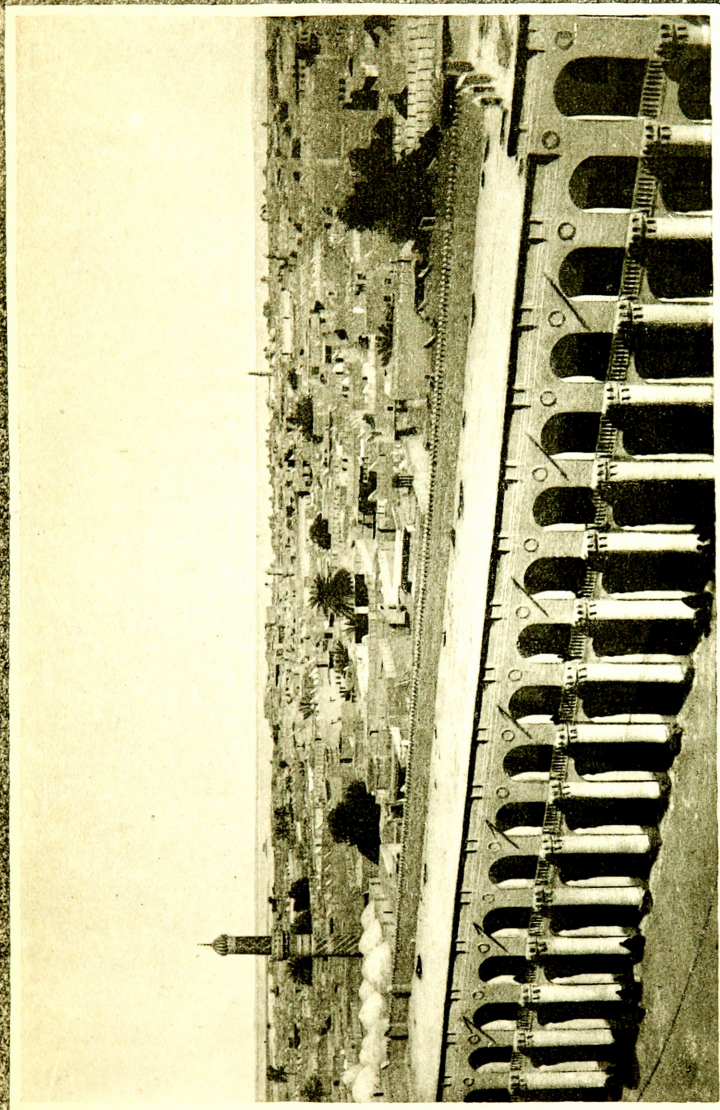
¹ By a singular coincidence the two men directly involved in this affair, Paul Botta and Padre Vallerga were respectively named French Consul and Latin Patriarch at Jerusalem, and the two together raised the question of the custody of the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, which from the days of Suleiman the Magnificent had, by imperial decree, been in the keeping of the Greek Patriarch. At their instance M. de Bourqueney applied to the Grand Vizeer to have the keys transferred to the Latin Patriarch, Vallerga. The Grand Vizeer, attaching little importance to the possession of two rusty keys, consented to ask for, and obtained an imperial order from the Sultan for their delivery to the Latin Patriarch. In due time this was presented to the Greek Patriarch, who curtly refused to give up the keys, and complained to the Russian Ambassador, who demanded an immediate counter-order, which was at once granted. But the French Ambassador insisted upon the first order being carried out, and the Grand Vizeer, puzzled as to what he was to do, hesitated. Thereupon the Russian Government sent the well-known mission of Prince Menchikoff, who demanded immediate satisfaction or that war should be declared.

MOSUL, 26th January 1845.

MY DEAR MARY,

A considerable gap in my correspondence has been caused by my Baghdad trip; on my return I found letters from you all with list of things per *Sydenham*. Many thanks for the woollen cap, it is admirable, had I only had it on my ride from Baghdad while breaking the ice under my horse's hoofs in the cold dark nights, it would have saved my ears and face, which suffered in the chilling breezes which swept down from the ranges of the Koordish snow mountains. I went down to Baghdad in three days, that is doing a hundred miles every twenty-four hours. Mr Tom Lynch, on his return from a visit to England, passed through Mosul in the autumn, and made me promise to go and eat my Christmas dinner at Baghdad; I thought no more about it, when a few days before Christmas came a note from him, "Dear Ross, your room is ready and your fire is lighted." The Post Tatar had just come in from Constantinople on his way to Baghdad, so I sent down and asked whether I could accompany him. He answered, "Yes, if you are at the post-house in half an hour," so we started for our three hundred miles ride, travelling day and night with an escort of one hundred mounted horsemen. Some were armed with lances, but generally they had long guns, and the captain was distinguished by a sword and a little stick in his hand like a shepherd's crook. The

The Porte, supported by France with the assistance of England, resisted, and war was declared. These rusty old keys, between Russians, French, English, Sardinians and Turks, probably cost the lives of a million of men.



PANORAMA OF BAGHDAD
FROM THE BARRACK ROOF

Tatar, the Suridgee (postilion), I and the mail-bags went at a jog-trot or a canter, while the guards on their fine horses were galloping, wheeling and chasing one another in mimic fight, to keep their animals in training should an attack from the Koords or the Arabs turn their play into earnest. We saw plenty of game, gazelles, wild boar, jackals, sand grouse, francolin and geese, some of the gazelles afforded capital sport, but although our fellows went at them at full speed they could not overtake them. The road hence to Baghdad is a succession of plains and long undulating hills; on the first day's ride I crossed the famous battlefield where Alexander overthrew Darius, and the river Zab (Zabates), which Darius passed over in hot flight, I crossed on a little raft of inflated skins with a party of "Haitahs," irregular cavalry who, like the roving condottieri bands of the middle ages, sell their swords to the Pasha who pays highest. Like Darius, too, I came to Arbela, but to my great regret I passed this ancient and curious town, both going and returning, in the depth of night, the only and the most interesting part of the road that I did not traverse both in daylight and in darkness. Another curious place is Altun Keupry (Golden Bridge), an extraordinary and evidently ancient place; it is a small fortified town built on an island in the Lesser Zab and connected to either bank by high bridges built like the Devil's Bridge at the Baths of Lucca. Going I passed the bridges by night, and the steep broken ascent and rapid descent on the other side were anything but pleasant, while looking over the low parapet, far below was just seen the water gurgling with the swiftness of the current. Farther on we skirted the banks of the Halys (still preserving its ancient name),

one of those canals cut by the industry of the old Assyrians to render fruitful, by the waters of the Upper Zab, the otherwise barren desert, and one of the few which the neglect and indolence of the Mussulman conquerors have not suffered to be choked and useless. When I entered the Baghdad territory, for the first time I saw the date-palm growing in groves, and to see the tall tapering stems shooting up from amongst the clusters of little mud houses, particularly when mingled with the drooping plumy foliage of the jujube, is beautiful. The entry into Baghdad was dreadfully tedious; during the night we had been dragging our miserable little post-horses through the deep mud of the plain irrigated by the Diala, a tributary of the Tigris. Worn out, we at last saw Baghdad stretching away in the distance, a mass of date trees, cupolas and aspiring minarets; we flogged our weary steeds into the most broken jog-trot I ever had the misfortune to experience, the sun soon shot down a burning heat, and after five long hours we passed the gate. The approach to their stables instilled new life into the horses and we dashed through a dense population at a gallop, to the cry of "Poshta, Poshta"; all was confusion in front, men, women, children and animals scurrying out of our way, till we drew up at the Menzil Khanah, or post-house. I sent a man to tell Lynch of my arrival, and in the meantime the master of the place advised me to draw off my boots. I did so and found the tendon Achilles on the left leg in a bad mess; the great jack-boots had been drawn on at Mosul and not once removed, and the hard leather had nicely chafed me, for, to the knee the whole leg was inflamed. Pulling them on again was out of the

question, and the astonished Baghdadlees beheld, I suppose, for the first time, a Frank equipped in full travelling costume riding through the bazaars in his stockings. That day I was obliged to nurse the poor leg on a sofa, next day I limped about with the aid of a stick, and on horseback paid a round of visits.

Baghdad is really an oriental city, nothing European to spoil the illusion, both banks of the river are occupied by the town, but the bulk lies on the left or eastern side. The boats called "guffah" are very droll and have not changed since the time of Herodotus; they resemble the coracles of Wales and Cornwall, are quite round and made of skins stretched tight over ribs of the date palm—in fact they are simply floating baskets.¹ While at Baghdad I shot snipe at Zobeide's tomb, saw the house of the Calendars, the remains of the mosque where Haroon Er-Rashed said his prayers—half of the cupola still remains the other half was carried away by the river after its over-throw by an earthquake—visited colleges and caravanserais of the times of the Caliphs, and was delighted with all I saw. It is a noble place decorated with most curiously shaped mosques, minarets and tombs,

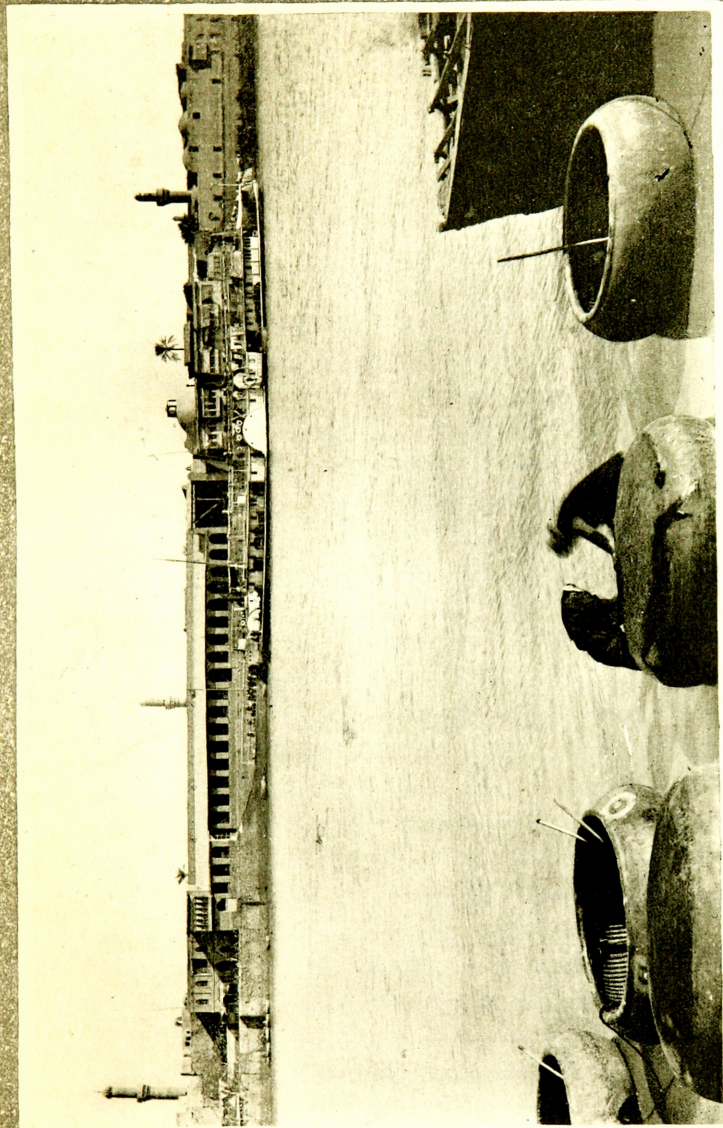
¹ "Their vessels that sail down the river are circular and made of leather. For when they have cut the ribs out of willows . . . they cover them with hides extended on the outside, by way of a bottom; neither making any distinction in the stern, nor contracting the prow, but making them circular like a buckler; then having lined this vessel throughout with reeds, they suffer it to be carried down by the river, freighted with merchandise . . . every vessel has a live ass on board, the larger ones more. For after they have arrived at Babylon, and have disposed of their freight, they sell the ribs of the boat and all the reeds by public auction; then having piled the skins on the asses, they return by land. . ."

"Herodotus," i. 194, Cary's translation.

frequently composed of coloured glazed tiles, and which only a pencil can describe. Zobeïde's tomb, for instance, is a kind of pine-cone composed of inverted scales, such a curious and picturesque monument and in very good preservation. I went out to the holy Sheah shrine of Cazamain, the cupola of which is of gilt bronze surrounded by gay minarets and embosomed in date, jujube, orange and pomegranate trees. Here we breakfasted with the Shahzadehs Riza Kooly Meerza, Timur Meerza and Mohammed Meerza,¹ and saw on her horse the famous Persian Princess Oumkakam, a lady whose beauty gained her such influence over Fath Aly, the Shah whose beard went down to his knees, that for a long time she governed Persia, and no one could rise but by her favour. At the massacre at Kerbela, she killed with her own hand four of the Turkish soldiers and was shot through the arm. The Turkish Government wanted to give compensation for her wound, but she scorned it with disdain. "I have killed four dogs with this hand and I will not sully such a glorious revenge by taking money." What do you think I saw amongst the curiosities these royal Princes of the House of Persia shewed me? a pen and ink etching of the *Devastation* in peril in the sea of Marmora, with Sir Stratford and Lady Canning on board, by John.² The blood tingled as I recognised his work in so distant a spot and in such hands. The picture had been presented by Lady Canning to the Princess and here at

¹ One of these Princes had aspired to the Persian throne; they were forced to fly from Teheran to Baghdad where they became pensioners of the Indian Government, and consequently enjoyed the protection of the British Resident.

² Mr Ross's brother, Lieutenant John Francis Ross, R.N.



BAGHDAD CUSTOM HOUSE WITH BRITISH STEAMER
GUFFAHS OR NATIVE "BOATS" IN THE FOREGROUND

HAWKING WITH PERSIAN PRINCES 31

Cazamain did I see it; what curious meetings in this strange world.

I had an opportunity of seeing a choice hawking establishment, as we found the Princes seated in a long open verandah overlooking a large yard filled with horses, donkeys, turkeys, geese, etc. ; and all round were noble-looking falcons perched on movable stands, their sharp claws sticking into little round cushions beautifully embroidered with silk, their heads covered by hoods ornamented with pearls and turquoises; the pet bird of Timur had an emerald surrounded with pearls. The small hoods were crowned with little tufts, just as seen in old Flemish hunting-pieces. Each bird had its name, —one, as I called him by his name “Hyacinth,” stretched his head forward and fluttered his wings in uneasiness, as poor thing, though he could hear, he could not see. Mingled with the hawks were fine greyhounds and English pointers, and some beautiful high caste mares were brought out for our inspection. We breakfasted European fashion, the dishes mingled English and Persian. Afterwards Timur Meerza offered to accompany us on our way home with his hawks, an offer I gladly accepted, and we had capital sport. The Prince cast his hawk and she shot like an arrow in pursuit after a duck, which, seeing its danger, made for the water; the hawk pounced down after it, but the duck was too quick, and dived, and the poor hawk had to shuffle as well as she could to shore; before she could rise the duck was again making the best of its way down the stream and another hawk was let go, then the first hawk rose again, but the duck was too quick for them and escaped. We took some land birds, however, and altogether I enjoyed it very much.

Riza Kooly Meerza shewed me the sword of Timurlane, it was covered with jewels, but time had had its effect, for the handle and scabbard were bound with whip-cord to keep them together; he never goes out without it, and in the house it hangs over his head. The blade was a beautiful piece of steel covered with gold inscriptions from the Koran, and the sentence "This is the sword of Timurlane." As I ran my finger along its edge I thought how many heads had fallen by it.

Baghdad possesses handsome bazaars—the shops well filled with goods—arched in stone, so in summer there is shade and the rain is kept off in winter. They are full of life, such crowds, Arabs, Persians, Turks, Jews and all kinds of people and all kinds of costumes; but all is going to decay, pass from the centre to the outskirts, and long bazaars completely deserted meet the eye, the shops filled with their own ruins, as the masonry gradually gives way and falls in. Amongst other interesting relics of old days at Ctesiphon I saw the arch of Chosroes, the last relic of his White Palace, it is a vaulted room, I forget how many feet high, but I believe 140, being one of the highest arches in the world. It was what is called a "leewan," a room of three sides, the fourth being open to the air: it has two wings highly ornamented with arched alcoves divided by pilasters, and is totally unlike anything I ever saw before. The materials are large bricks formerly covered with plaster which in some places still adheres in small patches. The ruin is surrounded by mounds, the remains of cities, and the ground is covered with bricks.

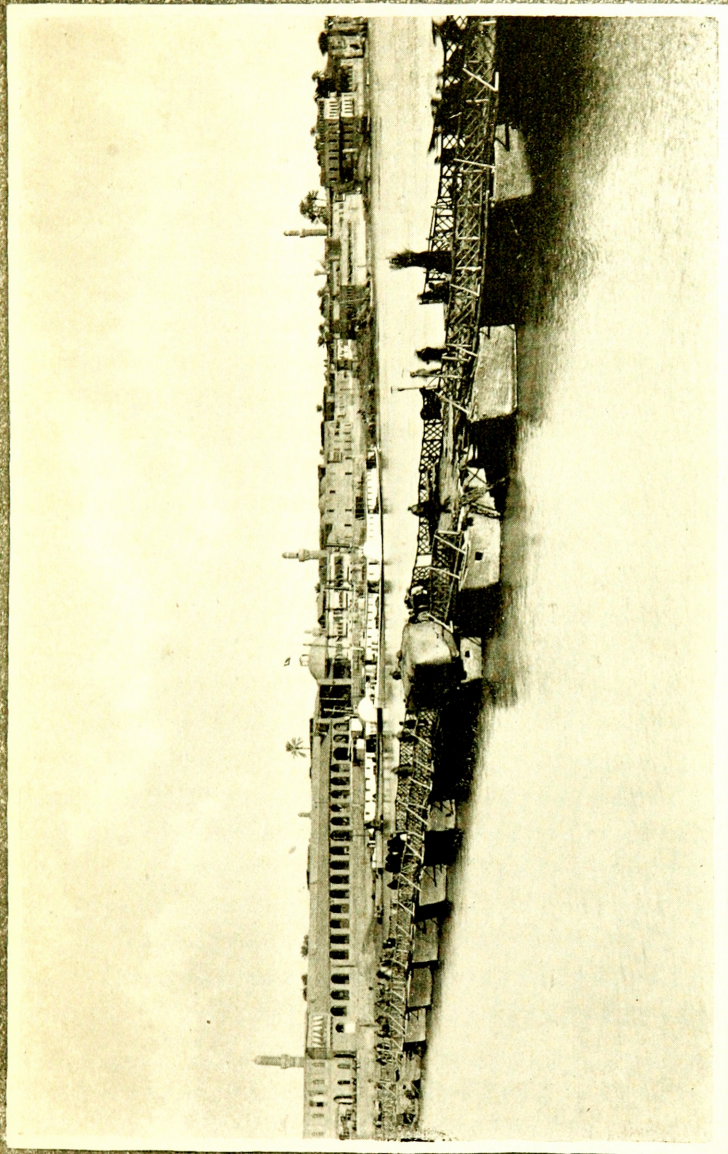
We had a grand pig hunt, too, and turned up a tremendous boar; I was mounted on an Arab called

"Prince" famous for his speed, but from having been ripped, very fearful of pigs, whether big or little. In a minute I headed everybody and came up with the boar hand over hand; just as I expected to run alongside of him he showed us his flank and off bolted my horse to the left, very nearly unshipping me by the unexpected turn while I was bent down, lance in hand to the right, preparing for the stroke. I brought the horse back and back, but could never succeed in running him up, and I left the field with a bright spear, much to my chagrin. Young Taylor then came up, and, as the boar charged, gave him a spear on the head driving along over the eye, and there it remained, he then gave a second spear soon after, and a sailor gave another, at last he stopped, charging at the horses as they came up and so terrified them that not one would go near him, I had to run for it over and over again. At last he caught a mare and gave her two frightful rips. I tried to charge again, came close up, and my horse bolted to the right, the brute charged in return and very nearly ripped me, for I could not use the spear over the bridle arm; at last we stood, twelve horsemen looking at him without a possibility of touching him. Stephen Lynch spurred his horse to the attack and the animal reared up and threw him backwards, luckily the boar took no notice. At last we walked him into a garden on the banks of the Tigris and there most of us left him as a bad job, however, the sailors still watched him and he tried to swim the river, got to the middle and returned towards a wall on the top of which three of the steamer's fellows posted themselves; the moment the boar saw them he made a rush, tried to climb up the wall after them, and fell back with three

spears through him, some bold fellow jumped down, received his charge and finished him. The tusks measured nine inches on the outer curve and were immensely thick. The Arabs were delighted at his death, for he had been hunted the day before and in his rage had killed one of their donkeys, and then driven his pursuers clean off the field. A smaller boar was also killed which did not show much fight as the first two lances were deadly, but he notwithstanding nearly ripped a fine horse belonging to Dr Lynch who had just given £30 for him. I dined with Major Rawlinson, Resident of the Hon. East India Co., who has a sepoy guard commanded by a native Indian officer, when he goes out drums are beaten and arms presented as to a general. The Residency is a magnificent house, decorated in geometrical patterns and looking-glass, and in the river opposite was moored the *Nicotris*. I also dined with Baron de Weimars, French Consul-General, Colonel Taylor¹ and the Hectors. It was a round of dinners and fun during my stay. Of Major Rawlinson I did not see much as he was suffering from a broken collar bone from a fall out pig-sticking. The ground is full of holes made by the buffaloes trampling over the ground in the wet season, and if a horse puts his foot into one while going hard he is sure to fall.

Major Rawlinson had a Bombay Portuguese cook—very good he was—and everything was done according to

¹ Colonel Taylor, the predecessor of Major Rawlinson as the Hon. East India Co.'s Resident at Baghdad, was so good an Arab scholar, that when the Cadi or the Mufti met with a difficult passage in some old manuscript and were not sure of the correct reading, they sent or went to him. He never left his house and was always to be found in his study poring over his Arabic books. Unfortunately his knowledge died with him as he never wrote anything.



BRIDGE OF BOATS, BAGHDAD

Indian fashion; cheese and ale was served after sweets and then in came the major-domo and said *Sahib, thcai hadr* (Master, tea is ready), and we left for the tea-room, where we were served with tea and "kalian" (Persian water-pipes). Half-an-hour later we were summoned again into the dining-room and Rawlinson said, "gentlemen you'll excuse me as I am still on the sick list, I depute Capt. Felix Jones (of the *Nicotris*) to take my place." We found the table cleared of fruit and wine and in their place a tureen full of smoking punch; scattered about the table were devilled herrings and turkey's legs. Capt. Jones filled up the glasses with punch and sent them round, observing that the contents were to be drunk off and the glasses reversed at each toast. This was repeated time after time, with singing of songs—very doleful they were. Then came cheers and then my health was proposed, and worst of all I was called on to return thanks. I had never made a speech in my life and did not fancy it at all. My indecision being observed there was a roar, "Ross you must return thanks," and so I had to get on my legs and come out with how sensible I was of the kind reception the hospitable inhabitants of Baghdad had accorded me, etc., etc., and finished by proposing the health of the ladies of Baghdad, then Richard Steven's¹ health was drunk with three times three and an extra cheer, for as I told you he is a great favourite here, and as his most intimate friend I had to return thanks in another speech for him, and so it went on. They made me sing too—*nolens volens*—and

¹ Mr R. Steven was H.B.M. Consul at Samsoon, and had been sent to Mosul on a special mission by Sir Stratford Canning to enquire into the massacre of the Nestorian Christians by Bedr Khan Bey.

I came out with something or other. The three Persian Princes were obliged to leave the table completely gone, and the end of it was that I was one of the few who went in to say good-night to Rawlinson. At two in the morning we got on our horses; it was pouring with rain and the grooms ran before us with lighted "meshals" (cressets borne on poles). All at once I felt something tugging at my left leg and at last found that one of my hosts had passed me with his reins all loose which had caught me round the leg. At length we reached Lynch's house, and I went to bed. Opposite was a roaring fire and as I put my head down on the pillow I felt everything turning round and round and as though I were performing Catherine wheels towards the fire. Next morning I awoke with a splitting headache. I had to pay all my farewell visits, to the Governor and to people who had been civil to me, and then to start on my 300 miles ride home to Mosul. At nightfall I got into the saddle convinced that I was in for a bad illness. But the exercise, and eating nothing but dates and eggs fried in a little butter, which is all the post-houses can give in the way of food, cured me and I dismounted at Mosul perfectly well. How I survived it I don't know, and am certain a month would have finished me. The days were spent in rides and visits to the fair ladies. If the Mosul costume is ugly the Baghdad is the reverse; fancy the headdress covered with pearls, Indian handkerchiefs embroidered in gold, twisted round the embroidered fez, flowing robes of silk, long sleeves, embroidered jackets of purple velvet, or of satin of all colours, and a gold zone round the waist, completes the dress of the Baghdad belle.

As the Taylors intend leaving for England in the spring, Miss Taylor has ceded her piano to Mrs Rassam, it came up in a Tahkt-era-wan, lettiga fashion—on poles between two mules. Along the road it attracted the greatest attention, the people hearing the Tahkt-era-wan was for a consul at Mosul, immediately supposed it must contain his wife, and wondered how she breathed as there were no windows; in town the arrival of the “Ingleez Santoor” (a kind of dulcimer) created the greatest excitement; when it was known that it was near the gate hundreds rushed to get a sight of the “Agait Musica” (wonderful music), one stout and pompous Mohammedan merchant named Mustafa Sabongee, running in his eagerness, fell flat on his face into the mud; the passage through the streets was a triumphant procession, and after its entry into the Consulate, the door was besieged by the mob. Next day all who could claim acquaintance called to see the “tamasha” (great sight); Ain’t they funny people? One Ulema (doctor of the law) exclaimed, “what a pity to waste such beautiful wood and work on a ‘Santoor’ when it would have made such a fine ‘Tahkt’” (throne).

I was very sorry to have missed my name-sake, Dr Ross at Baghdad, who has as great a love of animals as myself. Among the pets allowed to roam at will about his house is a leopard, who puts its paws on the window-sill and gazes down into the street below. When a sheep or a donkey passes he springs down upon them and breaks their necks, leaving the doctor to pay the damage. His greatest pet was a tame lion, whose companion was an English bull-dog of the name of Paris. The dog stood in considerable awe of the

lion, but was passionately fond of biscuits, so Dr Ross used to throw bits of biscuit for him nearer and nearer to the lion, who quietly watched and waited till the biscuit came within reach of his paw and the dog tried to take it; then with his claws sheathed, and without any desire to hurt Paris, he would send him flying to the other end of the room. Another pet is a monkey who delighted in tormenting the lion by jumping on to his back and when, to get rid of him, the lion darted under the dining-room table, Jacko jumped upon the table and down again on the lion's back as he emerged from the other side. When, however, he found that the lion was getting really angry he fled to the top of the open door. The lion was in the habit of taking quiet walks through the crowded bazaars, to the terror of people who did not know him. Finally, the Governor-General sent to say that although he had a great respect for Dr Ross, his lion could not be allowed to walk about the public streets and frighten delicate women.

On one occasion he left his lion in the charge of Major Rawlinson. Shakir Bey, who had been sent by the Porte at the instance of Sir Stratford Canning together with Mr Steven, then Consul at Samsoon, to protect and recover as many Nestorian women and children as they could, who had been sold as slaves after the massacre of the Tiyar Christians, went to Baghdad, when he had terminated his mission, to see the famous city. Of course, he called on so great a man as the Resident and, during his visit, while seated on the broad divan talking to Major Rawlinson, suddenly felt his right hand, which was hanging down, being licked by the very rough tongue of some animal. Looking down he saw the lion. With one bound he

cleared the room, darted out of the door and down the stairs. Rawlinson hastened after him, assuring him that the lion was perfectly peaceable, and begged him to return, but Shakir positively refused to enter the room as long as the lion remained there.

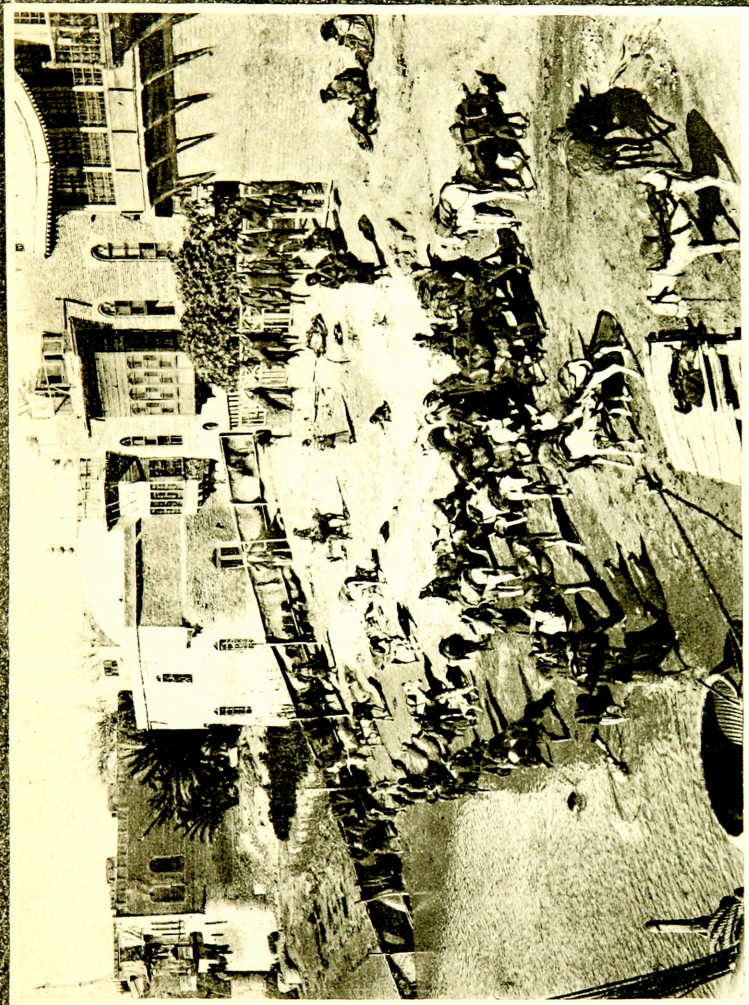
I hope I have made a friend of Major Rawlinson, for in spite of his broken collar bone he got up and escorted me to the door of his room when I left, and invited me to return to Baghdad, saying he wished he had seen more of me but his unfortunate accident had prevented it, and added, "I hope, Mr Ross, whenever you have anything to say you will write to me yourself." This is a good deal from him, for I should say he is rather haughty and keeps all around him at a certain distance. He is excessively clever and bears a high reputation amongst the diplomatists both at home and in India. Inshallah! Mary, I shall do well at last, at least prospects seem fair enough. It was Steven made me go to Baghdad on a pressing invitation from Lynch, he had already mentioned me to Major Rawlinson, and thought it was for my good that I should be personally acquainted with him, especially as Rassam is not in good odour with the Major, and Steven wished to separate the association of names in Rawlinson's mind.

MOSUL, 24th December 1845.

MY DEAR MARY,

I receive so many letters from you and answer so seldom that I have determined to wish you a merry Christmas. We are expecting M. and Mde. Guillois

in a few days, he is to be French Acting Consul here. The pair are only just married and the lady is reported to be very pretty and agreeable—you may imagine with what curiosity we are looking out for them. My friend Layard has found all sorts of curious things at Nimrood, Bassi-rilievi, battle-pieces—the war-chariots are beautifully ornamented and are each drawn by three horses and the warriors are dressed in mail armour and are drawing their bows, while the enemy pierced with arrows are trodden under the hoofs of the horses. Castles are being besieged on some, and on another a lady is looking from a castle at a man catching fish. Large bulls, too, richly decorated, bronze daggers, portions of swords and saws, little figures on ivory; all are remains, it is supposed, of Resen, built by Ashur the son of Nimrood as mentioned in Genesis, “and Ashur went out of the land and built Resen and Kalah and Nineveh and Rahobah.” Nineveh we have on the opposite bank of the river, Resen and Kalah lower down, and Rahobah remains yet to be discovered. When one sees these remains, it is wonderful to think how the Assyrians raised such immense mounds of earth to build their palaces upon, and to encircle their cities. Millions of men must have been employed in the work, and when we read that the walls were so thick that three chariots could drive abreast we are surprised, but the walls remain to attest the truth, although they are calculated to be 6500 years old. Some of the marbles seem sculptured only lately, so well have they been preserved by the masses of earth which buried them. I suppose to excavate the site of the palace will cost about £1500. Is it not curious that the Arabs have a tradition that Nimrood was built by Ashur, whom they call the



RIVER SCENE AT BAGHDAD

Lieutenant of Nimrod, and have therefore named Resen after Nimrod himself, instead of after his son. They say the city was destroyed by Sennacherib. It is odd that these wild people should have such curious traditions of cities, and of kings, who existed so many ages back. Major Rawlinson thinks that Nimrood was the first Nineveh, and that the palace now opened is that in which Sardanapalus burnt himself. That the place has been destroyed by fire is evident, for much of the marble is calcined, the metals are run into lumps and burnt bricks and wood abound—this was the case also at Khorsabad, which the Major declares to have been the second Nineveh, where another Assyrian king destroyed himself in imitation of Sardanapalus. These remains will furnish subjects for plenty of contention between antiquarians.

Our old beast of a Pasha has been dismissed in disgrace and Hafiz Pasha named in his stead. Both Rassam and I know Hafiz very well; he is a really good and intelligent man, and we are delighted; I hope something may be done to restore the condition of the country, and its industries.¹

Our Christmas party consists of ourselves, Rouet the French Consul and two Italian doctors, named Labo and Ricchi, the doctors are very queer ones, our dragoman Hoggia Toma and his brother Antoon, the least English party of the kind I have yet seen. Layard went down with Hector of Baghdad to spend Christmas and the New Year with Rawlinson. Layard is such a nice fellow—very clever and very amusing. He has an uncle in

¹ Mosul has always been celebrated for the fine cotton stuffs woven there, our word muslin comes from the Arabic *moossulee* or “of the manufacture of Mosul.”

Ceylon, a large proprietor; and his younger brother has just married and gone out to plant coffee by his uncle's advice; I think he has a cousin in the Ceylon rifles too. One meets these Ceylon people everywhere. Layard is going home in the spring, at least he intends to ask for leave; if he does I will give him a letter to you, and I think you will like this specimen from the East better than the rest you have seen.

MOSUL, 27th July 1846.

MY DEAR MARY,

Do you know you ran some chance of having a brother the less the other day. I as nearly as possible broke my neck. Mr Henry Danby Seymour is here, and with him one of the young Casolanis as a travelling companion. Both were anxious to see a boar hunt, of which they had heard a great deal at Baghdad. So we got one up, but Casolani could not come having an attack of fever. There was Mr Seymour, M. Guillois, Layard and myself, and several mounted servants. We got into some long grass, and I was riding carelessly, trying to persuade Layard to beat some tall, thick jungle close by which I knew was full of pigs, and out of which this year I had killed a ponderous boar and a very wicked sow. In the midst of my argument I heard the savage cry of a pig under my foot, and just had time to see a sow jump up and strike my horse close to the girths. My grey in his terror sprang straight into the air and I went flying over his head, but came down amongst bushes and grass and was not hurt. I had scarce caught my horse and mounted

when I heard the hallo; off I went at a gallop, caught up Layard and Mr Seymour, and the moment we cleared a gully we saw two large and about twelve small pigs cutting across the plain. Mr Seymour, on my Merjan, and myself on the grey, Shaheen, soon took the lead, the large pigs separated, I chose one and he the other. I was not long in getting up when the animal turned fiercely round and charged me; the horse, though generally fearless, was discouraged by what had just happened and would not stand, but swerved off and bolted; I brought him back over and over again, impossible, he was scarcely manageable from fear, I, nearly mad with vexation. Layard followed me and called out from a distance for me to turn the pig back that he might have a chance; the moment I got in front of her she drove the horse before her, however this play enabled Layard to come up; I then made a last effort for the first spear, for fear he should take the honour from me; I dashed up, she met me straight on and I buried the lance in her; still it did not check her, she and the lance came across the horse's fore-legs, he gave another mad jump and for the second time I was thrown. Layard says I was shot some five feet up from the saddle and pitched straight on my head; a whole bunch of hair was cut off, I bruised one of my eyelids, and scratched my face all over, besides straining the back and side muscles of the neck, in fact, I thought I had broken it. Luckily it was a sandy field and not a hard road. Although much shaken I was soon on my feet, and the first thing I saw was the beast of a sow coming straight towards me, so I took to my heels as you may imagine with no pleasant anticipations, as I felt that she ran twice as fast as I did although I was

doing my best. Layard saw my danger and came to the rescue, on which she left me to my great relief, made at him and got stuck in the eye for her pains; he then gave her two more spears, she in return cut his horse's foot, and in the rush got under his stirrup and nearly tossed him off the other side. When I mounted again I found Layard and the pig watching one another, but the loss of blood began to tell and she fell over, though the moment we came near she was up and charging; at last Layard went near her, she came on, his horse stood like a stone, the lance went in and she dropped dead. Six young pigs fell victims to the timid sportsmen who skirked the older ones. Mr Seymour found his to be an old boar which would not let him come near, and as he was afraid my horse might be wounded, he did not wait the charge; however he thought the sport splendid. After this we gave up, indeed my neck was so stiff that galloping was disagreeable, and my face so sore and my eyes so swollen and full of dust that I was not in a state to try again, even had there been any use after the horse had been so frightened. Inshallah! I shall make some of the sow's relations and acquaintances pay dearly for my tumbles when we go out again next week; I am sorry about Shaheen, he was beautifully steady before; only about ten days ago a large pig rushed at me, and the horse taking it quietly, I drove the lance in on one side and out on the other, he charged me about ten yards or so and dropped dead. Guillois's brother-in-law, a Smirniote, has such a horror of the pigs that he won't join our hunting parties, being too much afraid for his valuable body.

Layard is in town. He found a constant exposure to

the great heat outside at the Tell was beginning to make itself felt, and intends remaining a few days quietly here.

MOSUL, 17th April 1847.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have left my keys at home and I cannot therefore see whether I have any letters to answer, but I think not. Drummond Hay's book with its anecdotes of lion and boar hunting was read with considerable pleasure, as you may suppose, by a sporting character as I vaunt myself to be. We have had a great lack of rain this year and the crops are in danger, no trifling thing in such a country where there are neither ships nor carts to transport the deficient grain.

Mosul is likely soon to be the focus of great activity, and will acquire considerable political interest in consequence of the now seemingly serious intentions of the Porte against Bedr Khan Bey, who I think has sealed his fate by the last slaughter of the Tekhōma Nestorians, and the after murder of the Jacobite Bishop of Azokh in the Djebel Toor. Troops are marching from Samsoon, Aleppo and Erzeroom, regular infantry and cavalry. Our Pasha is enrolling irregulars, both horse and foot, and laying in great stocks of grain for the forces that will soon be concentrated near us. The Pasha of Baghdad, too, I believe is to send an irregular contingent force. What a curious sight the army will present. The Nizam, Suvary and Topgees, that is the Sultan's regular foot, horse and artillery; and the irregulars, Turkish Haitah

horsemen, Bashi-Bozook foot, the Arab Egaiglah and the light Arab Horse kept in the pay of the Turkish Pashas, the Arabs of the Avshaars or roving tribes, Albanians, Koords, and all kinds of races. Already Mosul is stirring more than usual. My room in the Khan looks into the connecting street betwixt the principal gates, called the Palace, and the Cannon gates, and every day parties of Haitah horse pass under my windows, with their large standards displayed and little kettle drums beating. Bedr Khan Bey has called a meeting of all the Koordish Chiefs, but whatever he may do will be useless, for if necessary a corps of 40,000 regular troops can be brought to bear against him, besides irregulars *ad libitum*. Indeed the tribes are looking forward to the approaching fight with great glee, as Bedr Khan Bey's country is rich, and glittering dreams of plunder present themselves. I myself should like very much to accompany the troops, as the scene of action is only two or three days' journey from here, but the Turks would not approve of the presence of an European, whom they would consider a spy. If Bedr Khan Bey fights, there will be shocking scenes, for the irregulars are a villainous set and spare neither man, woman, nor child once their passions are roused.

The Pasha came to pay Rassam a visit the other day and invited Mrs Rassam to come and see his lion. He admired a little Indian work-box which was on the table, so she begged him to accept it for the little Khanoum his daughter, who, with his Hareem was at Sivas, the ladies having refused to accompany H.E. into Arabistan. He was much gratified with this little attention, and two days after he sent his Master of the

Horse and several Cawasses with his carriage¹ and four greys to escort Mrs Rassam to the palace, which he cleared of people, and had a lattice put up to screen Mrs Rassam and her native friends from the public gaze.² After they had seen the lion, they were ushered into the hareem garden and H.E. sent his doctor to say how obliged he was for Mrs Rassam's visit to his Serai, and excused himself for not waiting on her, or asking her to come to his own apartments, but that she knew the customs of the country too well not to be aware that it would not be considered decorous, so he deputed his doctor, an European, to see that every attention was paid to her and the other ladies. They were then served with preserved fruits, sherbets, coffee, tea, and narghiles, or water-pipes, and finally the garden was stripped of its roses and large bouquets presented to the whole party. Just as they were leaving, the Pasha sent a very handsome Geneva gold watch, and requested Mrs Rassam to accept it as if from his Hareem, who, had they been there would have offered her more suitable and richer gifts,

¹ The carriage had been brought to Mosul Takht-era-wan fashion, the body carried by mules or camels on two poles. It could only be used between the palace and the outskirts of the town, the streets being so narrow that it was difficult for even two horsemen to pass each other. There are no carts in the country and everything is transported on pack animals.

² Mrs Rassam was a sister of the Rev. Percy Badger, their father had been a sergeant in the English army, a man of some education who became the regimental schoolmaster. Mr Badger was at school at Malta and then went to London and was ordained by the first high-church Bishop of London. When Badger returned to Mosul he professed to show people how the English clergy dressed, and went about in a long maroon coloured silk robe with a red shawl wound round his waist, and a red fez on his head.

which he at that moment was not able to obtain; she then got into the carriage and drove home in the same state that accompanied her going. Very gallant was it not, in an old Pasha of seventy-five?

Layard is excavating in a new mound called Kouyunjik, just opposite the town on the other bank of the river, and has found the remains of another Assyrian Palace; so far, the sculptures are much defaced and broken by the action of fire, but I dare say that he will at last meet with something in better preservation. This new discovery will probably detain him here some months longer. I shall be very sorry when he leaves for I like him exceedingly, and it is a great thing for me to see another Englishman occasionally.¹

You know I assisted Mr Henry Danby Seymour in purchasing and sending to England some good Arab mares; the other day I received a very kind note thanking me for all the trouble I had taken, and hoping I would not take it amiss that he had purchased a pretty seal for me which he thought I should like, and in return for the hospitality he had experienced from Mrs Rassam, and from Layard, he had taken the liberty to send them some books which had attracted a good deal of attention at home, and might therefore interest them. This shows well for him, for amongst the many who have been kindly received by Rassam and his wife, he is the only one who has thought it necessary to write a line to thank them.

I am in a most unhappy state just now, all our horses

¹ Of Europeans at Mosul there were then only the French Consul, his wife and her brother, Smirniotes who had never seen Europe; two Italian political refugees who called themselves doctors, and Mrs Rassam who knew nothing of England.

have gone out to grass, I have nothing to ride and am obliged to trot on foot from the house to the Khan, and back again, which in these countries is a great hardship, although I daresay you will not pity me much.

MOSUL, 12th July 1847.

My DEAR LAYARD,

Bedr Khan Bey has surrendered. When he heard that Ressoul Pasha had gone with Steven's man to Baghdad he lost hope that Persia would afford a permanent asylum, and he could no longer hold his country against the Turks, so before they reached Arrak Kaleh, he sent for "Rai ve Aman" (Pardon and Peace), and having obtained it, rode into camp with five or six soldiers. One account says that the Turks cannonaded Arrak Kaleh severely before he gave in, but there appears to be no truth in it. Zenier Bey they say was intercepted by the Tiyary, who after a sharp fight took him, and carried him to the Mushir—others say no, that he is with Abdul Samut Bey in Berwari, suffering greatly from the wounds he received in the battle on the Sert River. Thus we may say that the Koordish war has terminated.

Nedjib Pasha's Sheikh, whom he sent to Sfoog¹ is here ;

¹ Sfoog for long had been the chief Sheikh of the Shammar, and I was present when all the sub-Sheikhs assembled, including his rival Ayudah, in his great tent. Among the bedaween a kind of parliament is now and then summoned to decide upon any great question, such as the election of a chief of any great tribe ; these are all divided into separate sections, each commanded by their special Sheikh, but all subject to the great Sheikh, who alone treats on all matters connected with the tribe

he upholds the murder of Nijris as a necessary act, indeed the general belief, and that a strong one, is that it was Nedjib Pasha who put Sfoog up to it, and they say that Osman Pasha has named Ayudah, Sheikh; while it is also reported that Nedjib has sent the "khalat" to Sfoog. However, Ayudah has the strength of the Shammar with him, and Sfoog is obliged to keep out of the way. The Sheikhship ought to be conferred on Ayudah, to interest him in keeping some order amongst the bedaween, for as it is they are under no control. Three great war parties have crossed the Tigris at different points between this and Zakho, and have stripped the Sherabeen completely, with the Turkish Government, who, on their part, acknowledge the election by sending a cloak of honour to the elected chief. On this occasion the Shammar were to decide between the existing Sheikh—Sfoog—and Ayudah, and the majority elected Ayudah, while the minority remained faithful to Sfoog. So for a time the tribe was divided into two hostile parties. After Ayudah had mounted his mare to return to his own tents, Ferhan, the son of Sfoog, threw himself at his father's feet and whispered something I did not catch. I asked what he wanted, and the Sheikh told me his son had begged for permission to follow Ayudah and to bring back his skin; a proceeding which would have been entirely hostile to all Arab laws and customs. Later Sfoog, finding Ayudah was too strong to be opposed without help, sent to Nedjib, Pasha of Baghdad, and asked for assistance. The Pasha sent Gurjeioglu (son of a Georgian), with a party of his Haidars, ostensibly to help Sfoog, but with secret orders to kill him;—orders of which Sfoog had secret intelligence. As Gurjeioglu entered Sfoog's tent he looked at him and said: "You come to kill me." The Turk presented Sfoog with the Koran, and swore he had come as a friend. But next day when the two rival parties were drawn up opposite to one another in battle array, Gurjeioglu, who was by the side of Sfoog, drew a pistol and shot him dead. His freed-men (for like the Romans the great bedaween Sheikhs have a body of freed-men always about them) tried to revenge his death, but were all killed; in the *melée* Ferjan escaped.—H. I. R.

besides taking camels from the Hadedeen, and plundering some of the villages. It appears that in consequence of the scarcity, and the large supplies required by the troops, the villages were prohibited from selling corn to the Arabs. The leading tribes have sent to tell the Pasha that they are starving and must have corn, and that unless they are permitted to purchase it they will cut off every road and lay waste the villages; if they cannot buy bread with their money they will take it by force, and that famishing men are not to be frightened from their purpose.

The desert road is already closed, and rafts have been stopped and robbed eight hours up the river. On the Baghdad side the Arabs are carrying everything away, a large caravan was attacked near Kerkook and twenty loads driven off; had it not been for the timely assistance of some of the Obeid the whole would have gone. So much for that Prince of Governors Nedjib, who the Nawab told us kept only three hundred horse betwixt Baghdad and the Zab.

I have been twice for pigs; they are in large beds of "süs" (liquorice) in Jejsiny's island, but there is no getting them out of the "süs," it is so thick and high, and the pigs allow themselves to be driven up and down without deserting their cover. I killed a wolf however the last time, that had been doing a good deal of mischief amongst the flocks. They are much more cowardly animals than I supposed, this one was terrified at the impetuous charge of old Merjan, and when I pinned him to the ground with my lance he only showed his teeth and snarled. But they die hard; I suppose I speared him seven or eight times, but it was only after running a long way with his bowels

hanging out of his flanks under a hot sun that at length he sank down, and even then daggers, spears and pistols did not deprive him of life until his head was hacked half off. I had always thought a wolf pushed hard would have thrown itself upon the horse; but they are child's play to a boar.

I found out that Aly *was* Aly Ghata, and so I employed him, not without encountering a good deal of intrigue from Fat Toma. I have had several complaints and rows at the Tell, and have given them fair warning that if they do not keep quiet I shall employ Mansoor with a fresh gang. Toma claimed $2\frac{1}{2}$ piastres per diem instead of $2\frac{1}{4}$, but I told him I could not do anything without asking you; he says he got 3 piastres at Nimrood; his office is, it appears, to fill the baskets. Broken fragments come out along the line of trench, but nothing good.

A Kaimakam has arrived from the Mushir, bringing the official news of the fall of Bedr Khan Bey. It seems that Noorallah Bey, to make his peace with the Turks, threw out all his forces to cut off Bedr Khan's retreat to Persia. Khan Mahmood, after the battle of the Sert River, gave himself up to the Erzerroom troops. A grand Meglis (council) is summoned to-day, salutes are to be fired, and the consuls requested to attend the ceremony. That old fool, Mar (Patriarch) Shimon, is positively off, to escape going to Constantinople and being made an Ingleez of—at least I suppose so. Omer Pasha, at the head of his division, is on his way to Mosul. I suspect the Arabs may be aimed at. At Guillois's last night I heard that this Pashalik was to be dismembered. Mardin to go to Diarbekir and Mosul, under a Kaimakam at Baghdad; and Koordistan under another Kaimakam, also

at Baghdad. This last I should think problematical. Why, Nedjib would be a Viceroy, with such an extent of dominion! Van remains a dependency of Erzeroom.

By the bye, your last "kellek" was stripped of everything that could in any way be useful to the Arabs.

MOSUL, 7th August 1847.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

We were all glad to hear of your progress by your letters from Kabban Madem and Sivas. I spoke to Moutram (bishop) Behnan about Dr Smith's request regarding the tombstones. He said that he could do nothing without the Vekeels, the principal of whom is Shammas¹ Abdul Kerrim, and the division amongst the Jacobites is now very wide, the shammas and the bishop being on opposite sides; for us to risk the former would be to ensure a refusal; therefore, for the present, it is a difficult matter that had better be left over for the present, unless the missionary could manage it through the French, for whom I fancy Shammas Abdul Kerrim would do anything of that kind. Toma gave your message to Essad Pasha about the "Boyoorldeh." The old man was gratified that his pass should have generally procured your respect, and promised to snub the Nisibin people for their incivility. While you were discovering inscriptions at Paloo, Rawlinson was doing the same in Persia Lynch writes, I think, at Kermanshah, but it is not quite clear.

¹ Chaldean for deacon.

I asked Habbuba if she knew why Mar Shimoon had run away; she said because the Balioz (Consul) wanted to send him to Constantinople and that both he and all the Nestorians were afraid if he went there he would never return, and that in the Tiary they were all delighted when they heard of his escape to Oroomiah. Bedr Khan Bey, they say, has not left Djezirah, but is closely guarded, awaiting orders from Constantinople. Zenier Bey has bolted, no one seems to know exactly where; Mollah Kaddoos and some other of his stamp are still abroad, it is a pity they are not caught and strung up *in terrorem*; it would do a vast deal of good amongst the bigots, both of the mountains and of the plain.

The country is topsy-turvy with the Arabs. The post from Aleppo did not reach Diarbekir, as the Anizeh under Edhain Abu-Gheisheesh are laying the country waste round Suidiah, and have closed the Aleppo road to everything. Ayudah with the Shammar was lately threatening the country in the same direction, because he thought the Turks were inclined towards Sfoog. That old scamp, Emin Effendi tells us, got wind of the Mushir's intention to pin him, and bolted, and the old fox has succeeded in eluding both the Turks and Ayudah. The Shammar are now again retiring towards the Sinjar—at least Ayudah's party—but insecurity is in its glory. Danger on the Aleppo road, and the river both above and below Mosul impassable for rafts; the large quantity of goods that was so long arriving from Aleppo, owing to the danger on every road, have been waiting here nearly three weeks (the rafts were half made and again taken to pieces), and the risk between the Zab and Kerkook prevented small caravans from leaving. To-day we are sending off seventy

packages belonging to Hector by an "Egail"¹ with a hundred camels, who arrived yesterday from Baghdad, and who was attacked by thirty horsemen near Altun Kupry, whom they beat off with the loss of two camels with their loads, and two men wounded; but they killed a mare belonging to the robbers. Besides ten musketeers of their own, we and the other merchants sent other ten—and twenty guns will keep at bay two hundred spears—but even with that I feel very nervous about the goods, as this is now the second caravan attacked between Kerkook and Altun Kupry in a very short space of time. A d——d shame for Nedjib Pasha who ought to have the district strongly patrolled; but there it is—when Pashas are not responsible for the safety of their country, they will not keep up a proper force for the safety of the roads. What do they care if the merchants are plundered and trade embarrassed. The Constantinople papers mention his having sent up Bahram Bey with cavalry to Arbeel to put the country in order, but the "Egail" says he has not half a dozen serviceable horsemen with him. It is a fact that two caravans have been attacked and partly plundered, and the whole of the sheep and cattle driven from Altun Kupry, without a para's worth being recovered, or a single robber captured. But the French policy just now seems to be to puff up the Turkish Governors through their organ the *Journal de Constantinople*, without the slightest regard to truth—*vide* the numerous letters from Mosul and Baghdad, which make Nedjib and Essad Pashas to be perfect paragons; and then see the state of their governments.

¹ A corps instituted by Ibraheem Pasha (of Egypt) when in command in Syria, to train bedaween as an armed force similar to the Turkish Haitahs or Bashi Bozooks.

Misery amongst the villages, and violence among the tribes. As to this place it is going down hill like a rolling stone.

I believe I told you that Behman smashed your horseman into fragments, the slab that came out afterwards I have had saved, but it went into four pieces. For a long time after the slab I noted to you, nothing turned up but blocks of black stone; now two slabs flat on the ground have appeared, but seem to have nothing on them. I have another of those Greek-looking busts in terra-cotta, about half the size of the one you had; this one has the breasts very prominent, and round one of them is twined a most diminutive deformity of an arm and hand. No Greek would have made such things, they must be Assyrian; besides, how could they be at such a depth if not genuine? I intend letting the straight line run on for two or three days. Then I shall go over, and unless there is some promise, shall turn off from the angle of the east slabs, and endeavour to discover the other side of the room.

I am sorry I am too hard pressed for time to give you the details of the extraordinary row betwixt the French and the Chaldeans.

MOSUL, 21st August 1847.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Last post I wrote to you a long straggling and confused epistle, in which I mentioned having received your letters from Kebban Madem and Sivas, since which we are in ignorance of your progress; but having got that far

without accident it would be hard if anything befell you on the road to Samsoon. In my last I also gave you what merchants would call a "proforma" plan of the Kouyunjik diggings. What was my anger and annoyance when, after the post, I went out to judge in what direction the excavation had best be carried on, to find that pig-headed beast Toma had been experimenting on his own wise suggestion, and, in spite of my positive orders to dig straight into the Tell, immediately I turned my back had broken the ground at right angles and lost a lot of time in making a useless trench. Then finding nothing, had begun another parallel one at the point where I told you I had some idea of trying to catch the other side of the room; and all this time he had asked me day after day whether he was to go on straight and my answer was "Yes, go on straight until I come."

I have gone forward with the old trench right into the Tell, and broken fragments of marble are coming out, one of which has inscriptions. By continuing the trenches the other sides of the room might be found, but I doubt whether they would be well preserved; by going deeper into the Tell I have a faint hope of perhaps running across another portion of the palace which may, or may not, have suffered like the rest.

Some fresh attempts to bully the Pasha into recognising the validity of the Papal nomination of Moutram (bishop) Yussuf have been tried, but the old man has got his dander up and won't listen to Guillois or the monks. We are going to Berwary for a few days; Rassam is very hot upon copper and iron mines, and he wants to go himself to examine the different mines. By last post I got a letter from Henry Danby Seymour, who is coming

here next spring; he is going to write his travels, and asks me to send him materials unless I am going to publish myself. As to that, it is a flight beyond me altogether, but I shall try to give him the information he requires, and he may do what he likes with it. Besides wanting the requisite talent to become an author, even did I possess the scribbling vein, it would only be by *making* a book that a work upon Mosul could be spun into the required bulk of pages. A precious fool I should make of myself if I trusted my effusions to the criticisms of the public.

I forgot to tell you what the Chaldeans have done. They have written to the Pope that if he interferes with the election of their Patriarchs, or refuses to confirm those elected by the community, they will have no further connection whatever with the Church of Rome, but declare themselves an independent and separate body. Guillois insisted to me that the Patriarch had resigned, and that he had done so on the promise of a handsome pension from Rome. The Chaldeans have again written to Mar Zia to enquire into this, as they suspect that Vallerga might have written to say that the Patriarch had resigned, without asking for his consent. If he has resigned, they intend raising the bishop of Diarbekir to the dignity, as he is a bitter enemy of Trioche. I just hear that at the Tell in the straight trench is a black pavement, and under it charcoal and great quantities of broken marble; after the post I shall go over and see.

MOSUL, 16th October 1847.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

The Chaldean business is in abeyance, but the French are lowering their tone and the monks are trying to coax Kasha Petrus by assuring him that Moutram Yussuf will not be elected if disagreeable to them. But it is too late, the Chaldeans feel their own strength, and Guillois has cured them of their dread of the French name, so they remain quite firm. He is very silly, for he has written another strong letter to the Pasha attacking the Kiayah (lieutenant-governor), and indirectly the Haznadar (treasurer, or finance minister). He seems to set both Turks and Christians against him. The Kiayah says he wants to frighten the Pasha, and prevent his carrying into execution a strong Firman in favour of the Chaldeans, which the French have information will arrive by next post. His thunders are known to be empty words and create little effect. There is a report, brought down by a Koord from Persia, that the Patriarch is coming this way, but little reliance is placed upon it.

At the Tell indications always continue, but with the exception of a slab about six feet high and three wide, nothing has turned up. This slab has been broken off at the top, so that the inscription is only the fag end; it has also been either cut in two or else fitted to another, as, although the edge is cut smooth, in some of the lines the ends of letters spring from it, and so I am afraid this large slab of inscription is of little use. It has not been touched by fire, though a little corroded, but as the characters are of a very large size and deeply cut, every

stroke is perfect, not a line has been obliterated; the only thing which puzzled me was which way the triangles pointed. Bad as my copy is, for I am ashamed of it, it took me a long time to do, and I found it more difficult than I had supposed. I have kept in a straight line till now, but to-day have commenced at right angles and shall dig for fourteen days a cross trench. If nothing turns up I shall open fresh ground altogether. As well as I can make out the whole Tell has been covered with marble buildings, but many appear to have been broken up purposely, even where fire has not been present. This is the only way I can account for portions of sound slabs being isolated as they are.

To-morrow I go up to the mountains. My route is Dohook, Berwary, Asheetha, Zagwitha, Gelamoon, Chellek and Daoodiah. On my return I shall go to Bavian and see what can be done in the way of copying the inscriptions for you, but if I recollect right, M. Rouet represented them to me as on the face of a rock and very high up, and if that is the case it will be very difficult.

The country here is very much disturbed. Our wool caravan although escorted by thirty "Egail," besides about thirty guns belonging to the cameleers themselves, was regularly besieged at a day's march from this. Two camels belonging to native merchants which had lagged behind the main body were immediately carried off, two men severely wounded and another taken prisoner. As soon as we heard of this, and that the caravan had formed a square, with the bales outside and the camels within, without being able to move, we applied to the Pasha, who sent out Ibrahim Agha with two hundred horsemen who recovered all the lost property and took nine men on foot

prisoners, the horsemen escaped. The men were Abu-Hamid who were pioneering some of Edham's Anizeh—for Edham and Ayudah have made common cause, they say, against Sfoog and Ferhan.

MOSUL, 19th November 1847.

DEAR MARY,

I made up my mind to visit the scenes of Bedr Khan Bey's exploits this spring against the Nestorian Christians and send you a long account of my adventures. I consider myself fortunate to have escaped with my life and in future shall always travel alone. But I must begin by giving you some idea of the state of the country and of the various Meers and Beys or you would never understand my narrative, as until the terrible massacre of the Tiyary Christians some four years ago, the names of the Turkish districts of Tiyary and Tekhoma were almost unknown in Europe. The country is wild and inaccessible, with narrow gorges ending in steep precipices, and paths, so-called by courtesy, over rugged rocks and along smooth schistose ledges where a goat can hardly find foot-hold, and a false step means instant death. Generally at war with each other and with their neighbours the Koords, the Nestorians were always prepared for raids; their rooms were hung with arms, and a shot echoing in the narrow valleys called out every male above fifteen to the strife—even children of ten or twelve frequently handled their rifles with effect. A small annual tribute of about 2s. was paid

by every grown man to the Koordish Meer, or Chieftain of Hakkary, whom they acknowledge as their supreme head, but in time of war they were led by their own Maliks¹ or hereditary chiefs.

Relying on their impregnable fastnesses, the Tiyary Nestorians frequently descended in strong parties to the neighbouring districts of Berwary and Amadah² and plundered the Koordish and Christian villages indiscriminately; with the distinction that, excepting on few occasions, they spared the lives of their fellow-Christians, while they invariably murdered as many of the Koordish men as they could, but respected the women. Two Koordish villages called Ori and Bedon, situated in the mouth of the gorge leading from Berwary to Asheethah in the Tiyary district, were unable to keep any sheep; as often as they tried it the flocks were driven off by the Christians, and so frequent were their forays that at last Ori was deserted, and watch towers had to be built above Bedon to look out for the Tiyary robbers. In fact they bore a very bad reputation in the lower district, and their name became one of fear.

So bold did they become that when the infamous Bey of Ravendooz overran the whole country from the borders of Persia up to the walls of Mosul, fifty of

¹ Malik (chief) is the word always translated king in the Bible.

² The town of Amadah perched on an almost inaccessible rock, was the seat of Mohammed Said Pasha, a great hereditary Koordish chief who was subdued by Mohammed, the first Turkish Pasha of Mosul. He traces his descent in direct male line from Seif Ud-Deen (the Sword of Religion) brother of the Khalefeeh Haroon Er-Rasheed, and the Koords claim that his family has the right to the throne should the present line of Turkish Sultans fail.

the Tiyary Nestorians swooped down like falcons and stormed a village near his camp at Amadiah, leaving fifteen bleeding heads as a record of their visit. The rapidity of their movements was almost incredible; marching seventy miles, they surrounded the village at nightfall, burnt it, and were far on their way home before dawn. Six days later they repeated the exploit on another hamlet, whereupon the Bey of Ravendooz marched against them together with the Koords of Amadiah and Berwary. In the village of Liezen, near the river Zab, he was met by the Tiyary, who, though inferior in number, had the advantage of position, and after a severe struggle he was beaten. The Nestorians pursued the Koords for several hours and the loss on both sides was considerable. This partly explains the subsequent invasion of the Nestorian country by Bedr Khan Bey, the powerful Koordish Meer of Bukhtan—Oriental policy will explain the rest.

Bedr Khan Bey sent to Mohammed Pasha, the Turkish Governor of the Pashalik of Mosul, and asked permission to punish the Christians. This was at once granted, for his power and reputed wealth had long aroused the jealousy and the cupidity of the Turks. Most of the other Koordish Meers in the Pashalik had been overthrown, and their treasures confiscated by Mohammed Pasha, but he had never dared to interfere with Bedr Khan Bey. On the other hand the Nestorians had become a terror to the Mohammedans, and so the Pasha gave his consent hoping that the Christians would destroy whatever forces the Meer sent against them, whilst they would be so weakened that their ultimate subjugation would prove easy.

Mar¹ Shimoon the Nestorian Patriarch lived at Kochāness in the Hakkary territory and had always been on good terms with the Meer of Julamerik, Noorallah Bey; so much so that on one occasion, when Noorallah went to Erzeroom to tender his allegiance to Hafiz Pasha, he delegated his authority to the Patriarch, who administered the district until his return. It was only after Dr Grant's visit to him,² and an interview with an English clergyman, that he appears to have adopted the idea of throwing off his allegiance to the Meer and establishing the perfect independence of himself and his people. This ill-advised attempt occasioned all the after misery and suffering of the Nestorians. Perhaps under the auspices of a more resolute man than Mar Shimoon it might have been accomplished, but the experiment was a dangerous one, and even if safely carried out would have achieved no commensurate advantages in comparison with the risks to a whole people.

Noorallah Bey had with him at Julamerik a rival named Suleiman Bey; being a near relation, and of the same holy descent as himself—that of Omer—he could not

¹ Mar means both saint and patriarch, and the dignity is hereditary among the Nestorians; they claim that their patriarchs were acknowledged by Mohammed himself. When it is decided that an unborn child is to be dedicated to the patriarchate, the mother abstains from all animal food, and the child, of course, never touches it. Should a girl come into the world instead of the expected boy, she is consecrated to the service of God and becomes a nun, although there are no convents.

² Dr Grant was an American missionary who had studied medicine, and had considerable influence over the wild mountaineers. The mission house he built at Asheethab, mentioned further on, was the primary reason of the terrible massacre.

adopt the usual precaution of murdering him, as the tribe would have resented it. He therefore kept him near himself in order to watch his movements.

Mar Shimoon began by making overtures to Suleiman Bey, promising to use his utmost efforts to displace Noorallah Bey in his favour, if he, when Meer, would acknowledge Mar Shimoon's independence, and Suleiman Bey of course gladly consented to any conditions which might tend to make him Meer. The Nestorians being close to Julamerik, and a numerous and war-like people, their support or their opposition were of the greatest consequence. In the present case Suleiman Bey had partizans amongst his own tribe; some openly took his part but the greater number were concealed, and many were among the immediate attendants of Noorallah himself. This intrigue could not of course be long concealed from the Meer. To ascertain the feeling among the Nestorians, he sent to Mar Shimoon and demanded the tribute; the question was warmly debated amongst the Christians, and I fear that European counsels decided the refusal which was returned. Immediately, with the tacit consent, if not even with the open approval, of the Patriarch, predatory parties went out and drove away the cattle from under the walls of Julamerik, and the Koords retaliated upon the Tiyary country. In these affairs a few lives were lost on both sides. In the meanwhile Dr Grant had been busily erecting a large mission house, strongly built with thick stone walls and, what is more, loopholed as though for musketry. The site chosen was also remarkable; a low hill standing out in the valley, and connected with the mountains behind by a narrow ridge which formed the only approach to it. A

better defensive and offensive position could not have been chosen, the loopholes of the basement commanded the steep sides of the rock around, and half a dozen resolute men could have kept the approach to the doorway against hundreds; it possessed a well, a spacious yard, round which the house stood in a hollow square, large stores, etc. Noorallah Bey was more alarmed by the reports which reached him of this building, than by other and more serious causes operating against him.

There was a bridge over the Zab to facilitate the communication between Hakkary and Tiary, it had existed from time immemorial and had been built as a public charity. Mar Shimoon sent men from Zaweetha to destroy the bridge, implying that henceforth there should be no intercourse with Hakkary. Noorallah took this, as it was intended, for a declaration of war, and feeling himself, in the divided state of his own tribe, unable to cope with the Tiary, sought the assistance of his chief, the powerful and dreaded Meer of Bukhtan. He supplicated him not to permit a descendant of the holy Omer to be trampled upon by a set of infidel dogs, the declared and bitter enemies of Islam, and moreover promised, if Bedr Khan Bey assisted him, to make over to him the Nestorian districts and even to hold his own district of Julamerik from his hands.

In June 1843 Bedr Khan Bey started, plundering the villages on his road, and at the passage of the river Zab defeated the Christians, chiefly owing to dissensions amongst themselves. They were so confident that no enemy could penetrate far into their mountain passes, that many did not obey the call to arms. Mar Shimoon fled to Mosul instead of ordering the Maliks, under pain of

excommunication, to assemble the fighting men, and putting himself at their head. There was timely warning of Bedr Khan Bey's intentions, and if the Patriarch had not basely abandoned his people to the cruel fate he had brought upon them, the result might have been very different. Indeed as the Nestorians themselves say, man did not overcome them but God, who, to punish them, willed that they should not stir in their own defence, and delivered them into the hands of their enemies. Bedr Khan Bey having subjugated the country, retired laden with spoil, carried away many women and boys to be sold as slaves, and left his lieutenant Zeinir Bey with a strong body of Koords to garrison the "Kalah" or castle, as the house built by Dr Grant was called. At once a reign of brutality and cruelty commenced which drove the people to desperation. Men and women were made to carry burdens far beyond their strength, and were lashed with whips until they fell, some were tortured in hideous ways to make them give up supposed hidden treasure, others were killed in sheer wantonness. At length the people rose. One morning the Nestorians entered Asheetha one by one from the neighbouring villages, fell upon the Koords, who were scattered about in the long straggling hamlet, and cut them to pieces in detail. Zeinir Bey, according to his wont, was sitting under a large walnut tree not far from the "Kalah," when a boy of thirteen approached him and fired, the ball grazed the Bey's temple, he sprang to his feet, stabbed the boy to the heart and fled to the fortress. A volley of bullets followed him but missed their aim. The Nestorians laid siege to the "Kalah," but during the night two of the garrison were lowered by cords from the walls, contrived

to slip through the line of beleaguers and conveyed intelligence of the rising to the Meer of Berwary and to Bedr Khan Bey.

In the morning Zeinir Bey sent one of his men to Shammas (deacon) Nunno, the leader of the revolt, proposing to surrender the "Kalah," and begging to be allowed to send men for water. This was granted, and the Bey then asked Shammas Nunno to go up to the "Kalah," as a hostage that the Koords should not be molested while they fetched water. In good faith the deacon complied, the gates closed on him and he was heavily ironed.

Bedr Khan Bey had started at once to the help of his lieutenant, and the Meers of Amadiah and Berwary joined him from opposite directions, so that the Christians were entirely surrounded. The instant Zeinir Bey caught sight of his master's troops he impaled Shammas Nunno on an angle of the "Kalah," and a fearful massacre of the Nestorians began. Many fled to the peaks of Liezen on the Zab, others to the heights of Serspedo, where they held out for three days. After some months the few Nestorians who escaped the massacre returned to their villages where they led a precarious and troubled existence, being frequently harried by the Koords. Last spring, Bedr Khan Bey, remembering his easy victory over the Tiary, attacked the Nestorians in the upper districts of Tekhoma. He ravaged the villages, laid the land waste, and butchered women and children in cold blood. At length the representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople brought such pressure to bear on the Sultan, that he ordered the formidable Meer to be deposed as well as Khan Mahmoud, the rebel chief of

SURRENDER OF BEDR KHAN BEY 69

Van. Troops were collected at Kharpoot near Diabekir, and Osman Pasha, the Seraskier, a renegade Croat, assumed the command. He completely routed the Koords on the banks of the Tigris, and Bedr Khan Bey fled with a few horsemen to his stronghold Arrak Kalah. About the same time the Erzeroom troops were victorious over Khan Mahmoud and Zeinir Bey on the banks of the river Sert. The Seraskier besieged Arrak Kalah and after some days Bedr Khan Bey surrendered and was sent to Constantinople with his chief adherents, and his counsellors the Moolahs. These bigoted priests had persuaded him that a palace was being built for him in Paradise, whose completion required the blood of a few unbelievers. So on solemn feast days he used to seize some wretched Yezidi, or fire-worshippers, and if they refused to embrace Islam he cut their throats with his own hand.

I must leave my journey for the next post as the Tatar is just going.

MOSUL, 28th November 1847.

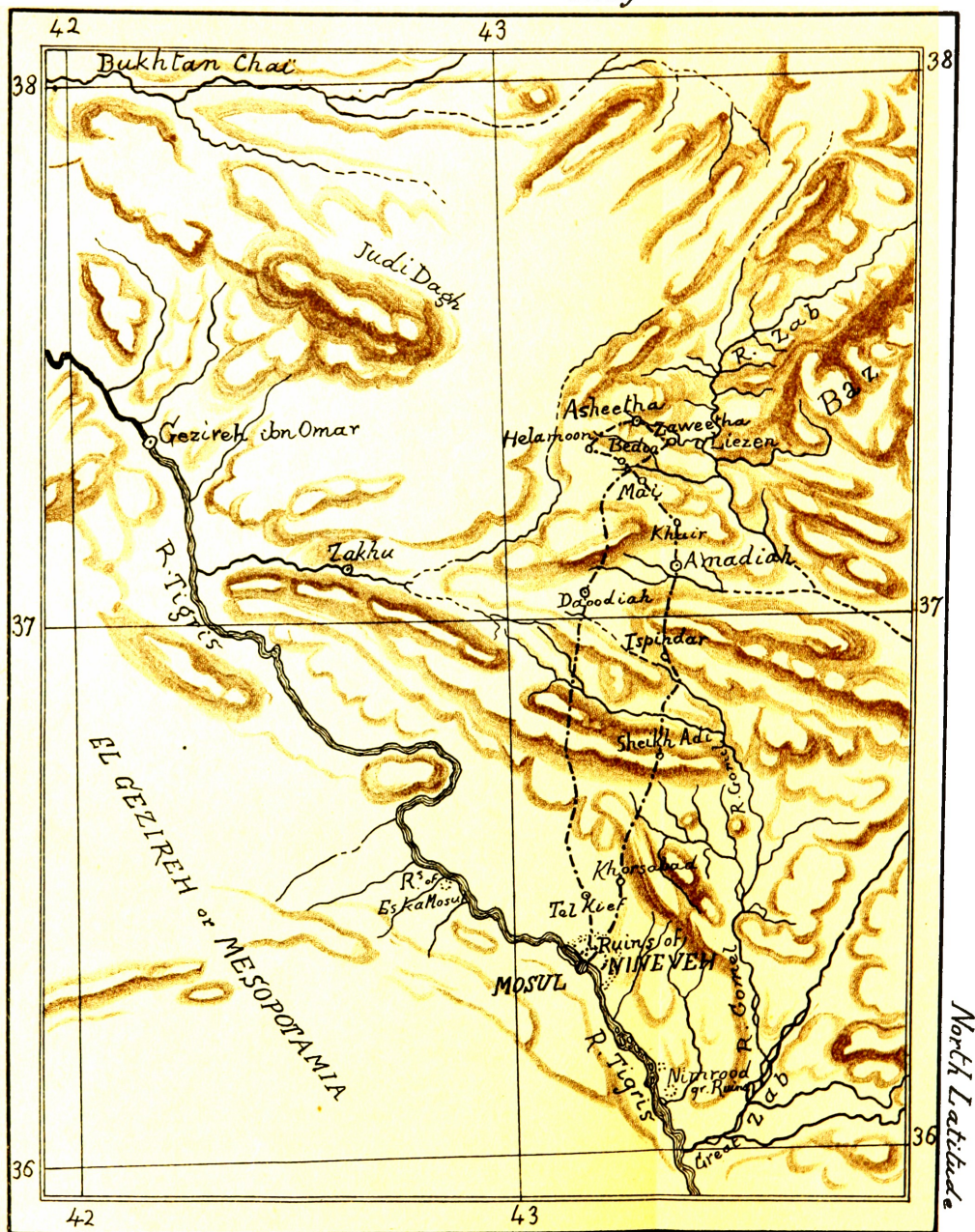
DEAR MARY,

I now fulfil my promise and continue the story of my expedition to the Nestorian mountains; I am afraid it will cost more postage than it is worth. I left Mosul in the afternoon, mounted on Merjan, my groom Temer on a stout little pony, my servant boy Aboo, an intelligent little Chaldean of about fourteen, perched on the top of a stout mule laden with a gun case, a small pair of saddlebags and bedding, and a Nestorian, as guide, mounted on another mule blind of one eye, which we soon found was

THE TIYARY COUNTRY.

Dotted lines show M^r Ross's Route.

Longitude East from Greenwich



Stanford's Geog^r Estab^t London.

Reduction 1:1,500,000

quantity of flat wheaten bread, wooden spoons were the only assistance used, and my fingers did the rest, for I am accustomed to dispense with knives and forks. Immediately after, I went to sleep where I was, exposed to the night air, which in these countries is not injurious.

Long before it was light next morning we mounted, and taking a more easterly direction struck across the plain, starting a wolf and a quantity of gazelles as we went along. Just before sunrise it was bitterly cold, the sky was clear and a sharp thin breeze swept over the wide level. Soon after passing the low hills we reached a deserted village on a slow sluggish stream over-grown with oleanders, and near by we found a clear spring where we dismounted to water our horses and breakfast. Three hours more brought us to the foot of the mountain "Rasel-Aïtooty" and soon the path became so steep, rocky and narrow, that to save Merjan I got off and led him. The heat was excessive, and on reaching the summit I sat down to rest, gazing back on the great plain of Assyria where lay the mounds of Nimrood and Kouyunjik, the excavation of which I was superintending during Layard's absence in England, and forwards on to the valley, broken up into small enclosures of stumpy vines surrounded by walls of loosely piled stones. On the left the orchards of Dohook made a black patch on the opposite mountain side, and immediately in front, at the foot of the second range of the Koordish mountains, a clump of trees marked the site of the village of Aitoot where we intended to bait. The place did not contain more than half-a-dozen miserable little cabins, built of rough stones and roofed with brush and mud, tenanted by Koords; their Agha, a young man, received me very cordially, set his wife to work

to cook breakfast, and while the horses were munching their chopped straw we chatted together about the affairs of the village. As usual I heard bitter complaints of the oppression they had suffered from the late governor Kiritloglu Mehmet Pasha, who had completely ruined them by his exactions. Their only means of subsistence were derived from a few scanty barley fields, their vineyards, and some tobacco gardens. I remained for about two hours and started again; the road led up another huge mountain so that I soon had to dismount, and had another laborious pull up. After this we wound along a pretty valley with occasional descents and ascents, passing close by a large Mohammedan village (some Jewish ones were in the distance), until after an hour and a half's ride Bāady presented itself, perched upon a precipitous eminence which we reached by a very steep access; we dismounted at the dwelling of Mollah Yussuf, and were welcomed by the old man to his nice-looking house. He was sitting in an open enclosure, on one side of which was a pole ornamented with the large horns of the ibex, a very common animal in these mountains where they frequent the highest peaks. He is a holy man, the descendant of a famous Koordish Sheikh or Saint, whose shrine still exists, and for the maintenance of which the village has been assigned by one of the Sultans. The place in consequence had a prosperous look, and the people were in better circumstances than usual, for the Turkish Pashas had no claim upon them, and they only paid the tithe of their produce to Mollah Yussuf, the guardian of the tomb, who makes good use of his income by keeping open house for travellers rich or poor; he is so unlike the rest of his bigoted class, that a Christian is as well cared for as a

Mohammedan—and in consequence he is both respected and loved by all. At dark I was ushered into a very comfortable room with a fine blazing fire, and a separate dinner was brought to me, although I had declined it, but the rules of the house did not permit a stranger to come in without food being placed before him—the old man himself always dines with his family in the hareem. In the evening I wished to pay him my respects as I was to start next day very early, but he came himself to see me and to ask whether I required anything. From this place I sent back my groom with the two horses, and hired a little, thin, white mountain mule, the only one to be had; I had great doubts whether the animal was able to carry me, but I was mistaken and taught not to judge by appearance alone, for the little beast carried me well and safely over places which I should have hesitated to cross on foot.

In the morning at dawn we left Bāādy; instead of the groom I had now the Koordish owner of my mule who attended us on foot, his name was Achmet, a square-made, heavy fellow of rather a sulky disposition, but at bottom not a bad man. We soon began the eternal ascent, at first on a fair road, at last over a most rugged mountain, with the bed of a winter's torrent for a path. But I was now at my ease, my little mule bore me up, and carried me down, admirably, sometimes cautiously lowering herself from one ledge to another, at others sliding along a slippery surface of slate, but never coming down, although I had only a halter to support, and a little stick to guide her with, by tapping the sides of her neck. We then entered a beautiful valley with a pretty stream surging and boiling through it, the upper ground was covered

with oak, while the margins of the river were laid out in rice fields, irrigated by rivulets brought from the river higher up; the crop had of course been then reaped, and that of lentils was gathered and spread to dry on the threshing-floors. The place abounded with red partridges¹ which came running up from below where they had been drinking, and the cock birds were challenging each other from one mountain's side to the other. Leaving the territory of Dohook I entered that of Daoodiah, and after passing some high ground beautifully wooded and planted with numerous vineyards girt by oak hedges, from whence I saw the peak of Amadiah, came into a broad vale, and leaving to the left the large barracks built by Mohammed Pasha, rode through undulating corn lands for the space of an hour, when we dismounted to rest in the neat little village of Ten inhabited by Nestorians. For about two hours we threaded our way through tobacco fields, and then across stubbles skirting the little willow-bordered stream, and soon commenced ascending to the foot of another tall range, up which we had a hard pull on a very bad road amidst rocks and trees. In some parts the rocks formed perfect steps, so high that the mules while scrambling up stood almost perpendicular. I found riding so irksome, and had to arrange my saddle so many times from its sliding back over the mule's croup, that I took to my legs again, but the work was hard and the day hot, and I was obliged to make many halts before cresting the top, still I advanced faster than the animals. The summit was bleak and barren, and its vegetation consisted of brown thorny tufts of the gum dragant² and in many places the ground was cracked into deep fissures.

¹ *Perdrix Saxatilis*.

² *Astralagus verus*.

VALLEY OF THE UPPER BERWARY 75

Here we found a well with the water near the surface, I was very thirsty and took a deep draught before perceiving that it had an abominable taste, a compound of bitumen and iron, the red rusty ores of the latter soon showed themselves in abundance particularly when we commenced the after descent. Our path led down a very deep, wild gully, on each side of which the mountains closed in fine precipitous masses, their sides as usual clothed in oak, from amongst which the partridges were calling on every side. The afternoon was getting late, and the shadow below made the depths seem more profound than they really were. I came down the steep descent in a succession of plunging steps, so that I was far below while my party seemed still hanging in the upper regions, and I stopped to watch them as they painfully wound down; then the Koord began to sing, the air, like all their music, was very wild and rather plaintive, and as his voice, sometimes pitched to its utmost, faded away in long falling cadences, which echoed along the rocky sides of the glen, the effect was extraordinarily fine. After the worst of the descent was over, we struck upon a little rivulet. It had only recently bubbled up from the ground but was momentarily increasing its volume, and its banks were thickly fringed with oaks, poplars, red berried ash, wild pistachios, etc., presently some pear and apple trees and a ruined mill showed that the place had once been inhabited. Evening was now drawing on apace, and as the glen widened we could only indistinctly make out the black tents of some of the Artosky Kotchars, a nomad Koordish pastoral tribe, with their cattle grazing amidst the bushes guarded by large shaggy dogs. At last we debouched upon the valley of Upper Berwary, and riding

through wild wood and over rice and millet fields we reached at dark the half dozen wretched little huts of the Nestorian village of Delghully. The night was raw, and as I did not half like the glimpse I had of the interior of the hut allotted to us I donned my great coat, and seated on a stone by the side of a blazing fire of small oak sticks, which shot its flames up in long brilliant jets through the darkness, rolled up a little paper cigarette, and thus occupied the time happily while my boy was preparing a cup of thick seething Turkish coffee. The people seemed in miserable circumstances. Kiritloglu Pasha had pressed them so hard that they had positively nothing left, and besides, they were constantly called away from their occupations to do forced labour for the Koordish Beys of the district; who obliged them to tend their flocks, and cut and bring them wood and do other drudgery without a farthing's remuneration. One of the Beys was in the village at the time; he and his family inhabited a large enclosure formed of tall leafy branches set in a close fence, one end of this was roofed in, also with branches, and the rest formed a little garden. In such places it is customary for the chiefs to pass the summer. At last it became so cold that I was driven into the little chamber already well occupied by several men, women, children, and a squalling baby in a cradle. On the floor a fire was burning which served us both for warmth and light, its smoke filled the whole space and found an exit at the door. I made my hosts happy by giving them coffee all round.

At dawn we were on the move and marched through a beautiful park-like country watered by a shallow stream, and then along the roots of a rough mountain side where

we saw some little smelting houses. The ores are collected in summer, and whole acres of wood are fired as they stand for fuel. The trees thus blasted die, but are not consumed, so that in winter, when the deep snows prevent the people from digging, the wood is easily felled by a blow or two of the hatchet; whereas if green the work would be hard, and the wood would not burn well when used for roasting the ores, which are very rich and readily yield their metal under the primitive process adopted.

We then passed the Koordish village of Ravina Ormana, the residence of an intolerant Koordish Saint called Mollah Mohammed, a son of Sheikh Yussuf, who had his eyes seared by Ismail Pasha of Amadiyah for conspiring against him. We saw the Mollah busily superintending the progress of a "Kasr," or stone and lime built house, which he was erecting for himself and of which I had heard a good deal; for it was the admiration of all the country round—not that there was anything wonderful in it to one accustomed to cities, although a perfect palace compared to the hovels of the mountaineers. Immediately above were a number of the leafy arbours already described, with small garden plots of tobacco plants and marigolds. They had been erected round the clear pool of a sparkling spring which also had been roofed over with boughs. Keeping along a stony road with rough mountains on one side and fields on the other. we came in another hour and three quarters to Mai, a Nestorian village, dug into the side of a hill composed of a slaty soil of a beautiful lilac and pink colour. The houses consisted of two rooms one over the other, and from their site being cut out of the slope, either storey was entered from the ground, thus dispensing with the

use of stairs. The hill formed one side of a small, well-watered valley, which runs up the mountains in one continued dark green line, formed by fine old walnuts, interspersed by poplars, growing by the numerous little rills, artificially carried along the declivity of the valley in parallel lines to irrigate the rice, millet, and lentil fields, which rose in terraces one above the other. The two latter were not ripe and I had an opportunity of observing these grains which I had not yet seen. The millet called "dary," cultivated on the plains, I knew well, as it is much used by the Arabs. It grows thinly on tall canelike stems rising occasionally to twelve or fifteen feet high, and bears a large head like maize which curves downwards as though too heavy for its stalk. But the mountain species, called "garis" in Chaldean, is sown thick like wheat, and is of about the same height with upright heads shaped like a bulrush tuft, but composed of hundreds of little round golden seeds—it is very elegant and would look beautiful in a lady's hair—from the flour bread is made, but of very bad quality. The lentil called "māāsh" is not unlike a French bean, but bears smaller pods containing minute speckled beans, which are used, boiled with salt and red-peppers, as a fasting dish.

The people spread me a felt under the shade of a wide-spreading walnut, for the sun was powerful. I enjoyed the scene, sitting on the soft turf, listening to the rills gently murmuring, and watching the woodpeckers running up and down the tall poplars, to which vines now began to be trailed instead of being planted out in little stumps as in the lower districts. The place too looked so flourishing with the people reaping and treading out the crops already gathered, and the cultivation was

rich and neatly managed. I was in something like a doze when two Koords walked up and saluted me, fine, tall men fully armed, with high conical caps of white felt, round which were wound several black and red cotton handkerchiefs, a thick black jacket and a striped under-vest. Their trousers were loose, of black and red striped woollen stuff, and across their shoulders were slung the cartouche cases with long dangling chains suspended to them, hanging as low as the knee. In walking the chains jingle, and when many men are marching together must make a great noise; perhaps like the Chinese they hope to frighten an enemy by the clang of their arms. Each held a long rifle, and at their waists were the curved khangars, or daggers, deadly weapons in the hands of those who know how to use them. We were soon engaged in friendly conversation, for I had answered their salutations, and treated them to a cup of coffee. If I admired their appearance, they were fully as much taken up with me, and wondered at the percussion locks of my pistols and the gilt hilt and figured blade of my sword, nor were my long boots and racing spurs without attraction. We saddled again and rode straight across the valley between hedges of wild mulberry, eglantine and privet, the nesting-places of innumerable blackbirds, and the impudent magpies here and there reminded me of other and far distant scenes. Then again commenced another fatiguing ascent of a mountain, the bulwark of the, till lately, independent Nestorian district of Tiyary. As we crawled up we saw the beautiful wooded valley stretching far away to the north, dotted here and there with little villages rising one over the other, until the rocks of the ravines by which we were ascending shut out all else

from our view. The coveys of partridges which we constantly sprung enlivened the scene, as we roused them out of the gravel where they had been dusting and basking themselves in the sun, or from the oak copses where they had sought shade. As we rose the trees disappeared, and the summit showed nothing but thistle and gum-draganth plants, and on coming over the brow our road was between rice fields belonging to Zaweetha. We were upon the top of a wall of loose stones, for the ground is so full of them, that on clearing a piece of land it is first necessary to build a wall round the intended field. A space is left betwixt the enclosures of each field of about five feet, sometimes less, and into this are flung the stones gathered on either side, so that by the time the land is fit for sowing, the quantity of stones thrown between the walls forms a road lying about eight or ten feet above the level of the soil. Passing this we continued descending over a wild waste until we reached a point whence we looked down upon Zaweetha, which seemed quite close; but we had to get down an almost straight wall of rough rock by a little path of sharp zig-zags, driving the saddle mules before us and supporting the baggage animal which, although its load was very light, we nearly lost over the precipice, and the guide was thrown upon a rock and a good deal hurt in his exertions to sustain the beast. At last Zaweetha faced us on the opposite side of the ravine in which it is built, while a mountain torrent came thundering down in a rocky bed which it had cut for itself and polished in its almost perpendicular fall. As I had got a little ahead again of my party, I sat down to wait for them, and my first welcome to the Tiyary was from a Nestorian damsel, a good look-

ing maid of about fourteen, who came from her house a little lower down to offer me a basket of fine grapes, which were acceptable enough after the fatigues of the day. She entered readily into conversation and told me she was one of the rescued slaves and had been some time in Mosul, so knew Layard's name and mine as diggers for treasure at Ninrood. We soon cleared the intervening space and rode to the Kiayah's¹ house—a tall powerful man who was delighted to see us. He and many of his family had been saved in the terrible massacre which had overtaken the Tiyary in the midst of their pride and prosperity by the friendship of Nourallah Bey. He pointed with a sigh to the bare walls of the room where now hung one solitary short rifle, and told me that before the Koordish invasion they were covered with arms, and that from his own house alone he could then send fifteen men fully armed to fight. His was a good specimen of a Tiyary house, built, as they all are, of rough masses of slate forming a large square, with poplar trees for beams, crossed with long slates covered by a mass of beaten earth. One side of this was open, having merely a parapet wall about two feet high giving upon a terrace which formed the roof of a shed for cattle. At the back was a closed apartment used by the women and for winter quarters; round the house was a little garden where a few cabbages, gourds and Jerusalem artichokes flourished, and some pomegranate and quince trees with a vine or two clustering round poplars. On one side of the garden under a little shed were a quantity of beehives, made of long tubes of wicker work plastered with clay, which were protected by a low hedge as a shield against wind,

¹ Headman of the village.

which it seems is hurtful to them. We sat in the open chamber, and a fire was lighted against the parapet while dinner was served; for tablecloth, as usual in the mountains, an ibex skin was spread on the floor. On this was the eternal dish of boiled rice and lentils, seasoned, instead of butter, with the fat of a sheep's tail, which by the way is enormous, and upon the size of it the value of an animal chiefly depends, some tolerable wine was also forthcoming. Afterwards we all collected round the fire in a semi-circle, men and women mixed together and talking without restraint, which struck me as being so very different from the habits of the plain, where the women are kept quite distinct from the men; for even should they be in the same room, as is occasionally the case amongst the Christians, they invariably herd together apart from the men. My enquiries were chiefly regarding the details of the slaughter committed by the Koordish chieftains Bedr Khan Bey, Nourallah Bey and Zeinir Bey. It must have been fearful. Many families were entirely destroyed, of others only one or two remained. But from all I heard, even from themselves, I could not help thinking that they had greatly brought it on their own heads, and I firmly believe that had the tables been reversed, they would have exercised equal cruelties upon the Mohammedans. Their name was hated by all their neighbours whom they were constantly pillaging and murdering.

The great slaughter occurred at Liezen on the Zab, some way lower down the valley, where a number of men, women and children sought refuge on the top of a cliff which could only be approached by a narrow ledge running along the face of the wall of rock and interrupted

by chasms. Over these it was necessary to jump, with scarce space sufficient for a man's foot to rest—a nervous feat at any time, but utterly impracticable in the face of a deadly enemy. The Koords besieged the place without attempting to gain the top, and as the Nestorians had neither food nor water, they were obliged to accept a treacherous promise of safety from the Koords and allow them to gain their retreat without opposition. Then began a cruel butchery. At first the Koords used their guns, then they cut down the miserable wretches with their sabres and stabbed them with their khangiaris. Finally they threw them over the precipice, at the foot of which their bones still lie whitening, mixed with long locks of women's hair and rotting fragments of woollen dresses and shoes. I did not go to this scene of death, for I had agreed to meet some friends at a village called Gelamoon by a certain day and I was afraid I should not have time. As it turned out I might easily have done so; it was a lesson never in such trips to hamper oneself with engagements. I found at Zaweetha, as was the case all over the Tiyary, that only one half of the houses had been rebuilt, partly because their occupants were no more, partly from want of means, as the Koords had fired the houses, and cut down the greater portion of the poplars, so that beams were both scarce and dear. On getting up betimes next morning, I found that my host's wife had prepared a breakfast for me, I explained that I was not in the habit of eating at so early an hour, but she declared no guest had yet left her house without first partaking of food, and that such was the invariable custom of the Tiyary. I did not like to offend the hospitable dame, and so I was

constrained to eat a certain quantity of rice and to drink a cup of wine, when I mounted attended by the good people's blessings. We clambered up a short rough steep and were soon upon one of the vilest roads I ever saw—if road it could be called. At times a track worn betwixt large masses of rock was visible, sometimes it led over rude fragments of projecting stone and then descended again in huge steps; frequently not a sign of a path was to be discovered. The ugliest parts were over flat sheets of sloping slate, and in such a place my mule slipped and came upon her knees. For a moment I confess my heart contracted at the prospect of rolling down into the ravine below, where a little rill trickled and wound its way among large boulders and stones, the *débris* of the mountains on either side. However, I was too old a traveller not to know that my best chance was to trust to the mule, and I sat motionless, while the creature, fully aware of her danger picked herself up slowly and cautiously, and steadily pursued her way. Occasionally a cliff would bar our passage and force us to descend to the rivulet, which we sometimes skirted and sometimes waded through. The scene just about sunrise was very imposing, beautiful it could not be called, but grand; from the bottom of the wild ravine we looked up to the high mountains, rising above us in tall precipitous masses till they finished in pinnacles of slate, upon which the first rosy rays were shining, while all beneath was grey and sombre. I pitied a Nestorian woman just before us, who was on her way to Asheetha (Chaldean for avalanche), laden with an enormous burden, but she progressed just as fast as we did, for the mules picked their way with very slow and hesitating

steps. Indeed in actual marching she beat us, and it was only when she rested herself for a few minutes at the foot of the steep ascent that we came up again with her. It is wonderful what loads the hardy mountaineers will carry over their difficult country, they are used to it from children, for they possess few beasts of burthen, and when mules are employed I believe the loads are frequently taken off their backs and carried by men in the more dangerous passes. The more I saw of this savage district, the less I could understand how the Koords succeeded in penetrating into it. It was evident that resolute men might have held such defiles against any force; the rocks and stones alone were sufficient arms, and required only to be launched from on high to crush whoever might attempt the path below. An inexplicable inertness, half apathy and half panic, seems to have seized the Nestorians, and they allowed their enemies to enter almost unopposed. It was not cowardice that restrained them from defending their homes, they had given too many proofs of daring courage to allow their bravery being questioned. Constantly engaged either in defending their own property or pillaging that of others, especially in summer, when they led their flocks to pasture in the frozen uplands, they had almost daily skirmishes with Koordish marauders who came to steal their sheep, and from early childhood they were accustomed to carry arms. I have been told that the arrival of a couple of Mar Shimoon's Tiyary messengers was sufficient to make a whole village in the lower districts tremble, and in conscious pride of the terror they inspired, their bearing was haughty and insolent. Now they have lost all their

best fighting men, their "Maliks" or chieftains are no more, and the residue is broken in spirit. Yet their irascible temper occasionally shows itself, but they have "had their eyes broken" as a Koord said to me; borne down by poverty and distress, they have become different people; they have learned to fear, and have felt the crushing weight of oppressive tyranny, and now quail under even a suspicion of danger.

As I journeyed on I saw the value of arable land, for I observed frequent little patches, not above a couple of yards square, carefully fenced round with stone and cultivated. After two hours of slow travelling the ravine began to widen, and the narrow bottom lay in graduated fields round which little rills of water were everywhere conducted, while numerous walnut trees graced their margins. Along our path vines gracefully bent from the tall poplars. From this for the space of an hour the village extended in scattered dwellings, each house situated amongst its own lands; until another ravine opening into the main valley formed a large open dell, nowhere quite level, but sufficiently so to allow of cultivation, houses and fields, as usual rising and sinking in terraces supported by walls. On the eastern side the dark foliage of the walnuts, interspersed with a few cottages, ran up the mountain sides to a considerable height, marking the course of the little rivulets which nourished the vegetation on either side. We rode up to the house of a priest whom I had known at Mosul, where he formed part of the suite of the Nestorian Patriarch Mar Shimoon, and was brother to his late secretary, Kash¹ Auraha, mentioned by Dr Grant in

¹ Kasha, priest in Chaldee.

his book on the Nestorian Christians. My host, whose name was Kasha Dinha, received me very hospitably, and was glad to hear the news from Mosul, and to talk over the grievances of his flock, in the hope that our consul might obtain them redress, as he was always inclined to exert his influence with the Turks in their behalf, and had indeed already done much for both them and their Patriarch. Not that I think the latter was grateful for his kindness, although the Nestorians in general were. The house was built like those at Zaweetha, it consisted of a good sized square leewan above, having one side half open to the air, and another room below entirely closed for winter. We all lodged, men and women, in the upper room, which from the slope of the land could be entered without the aid of steps. In it were tall wicker baskets plastered over with white clay, and of small circumference in comparison to their height, used for preserving wheat and other seeds; to the rafters were hung little bunches of tobacco leaves to dry. On one side was the fire-place, standing out in the room without a chimney, and round this were congregated the women, busy cooking and baking bread; this last operation was speedily effected by plastering lumps of millet dough upon the sides of the hot, clay fire-place. A painted wooden box brought from Mosul, much admired by the neighbours, contained the clothes of the family, and this, with a mattress for the priest, and some coarse felts for the rest of the occupants, completed the furniture. In one corner two or three little wicker cages contained tame partridges, which are brought up from the nest, and are kept to fight, like cocks, and also for their call. They become so perfectly domesticated that when let out for exercise they walk in front of the

houses without attempting to make their escape, although perfectly able to fly, and within hearing of the wild birds. I have seen them so bold as to worry strangers, springing and pecking at their feet.

I walked to see the ruins of Dr Grant's "Kalah" lying beneath us in the centre of the valley on a projecting spur of rock which extended out in a ridge, and terminated in a little hill affording just space for a comfortable house to be built on it. A portion only of the basement storey remained, the building having been purposely destroyed by the Koords when they evacuated it after the second massacre, lest at any future time it might avail the Nestorians as a fortress. As I walked over the ground Kasha Dinha pointed out to me where the murdered bodies of his countrymen were found by the survivors, when they returned to their valley after the Koords had withdrawn. Here two corpses lay, there four, five, here so and so was found, there some one else; now a man, then a woman, their naked, festering corpses scattered unburied where they fell. The mission house, or castle, to call it by its present name, was strongly placed and solidly built of stone, and formed an almost impregnable stronghold against enemies armed only with rifles and without artillery. Nevertheless when occupied by Zeinir Bey and his Koordish garrison, the Nestorians on one occasion made so gallant a charge that they cleared the narrow ridge, burst open the gates, and penetrated into the outer court. But they experienced so sharp a reception from the windows of the surrounding apartments, whence the Koords poured a deadly, unceasing fire upon them, that they were compelled to retreat after losing a number of their men, while endeavouring in vain to force

the doors. The Koords did not escape entirely unscathed, but their loss was trifling, shielded as they were behind stone walls. The Nestorians rue the day when they permitted Dr Grant to build his house. In the first instance, it was the main excuse for the combined attack of the Koords, who feared that Europeans intended establishing themselves there as masters of the country, and afterwards it enabled them to keep the Nestorians in subjection. Without it the Koords would not have ventured to leave a garrison, and had they done so, the Tiyary would have cut them off to a man, and been free to guard the frontier passes, untroubled by the presence of an enemy in the heart of their country to divert their attention.

As in all the higher districts, rice, millet, lentils and tobacco, with a little wheat and barley, are raised in the Tiyary, but barely sufficient for the wants of its inhabitants, who in former times relied mainly upon the produce of their flocks. Their sheep, and the wool, tallow, and tail fat found a ready sale to the small dealers who came from the plains; and as their expenses were next to nothing, their food being mostly grown by themselves, and their clothing woven by their women from yarn spun from their own wool, they generally had more than enough money for their requirements. The excess was employed in the purchase of silks, and gold and silver ornaments for their women, or in arms, and many were able to lay by small hoards. Thus in old times they were all comfortable in their circumstances, and some were rich, but now they have a hard struggle for bare livelihood. Till very lately they have been constantly oppressed by the Koords. They have had to build themselves new houses, to purchase

seed and implements of husbandry, all from the little savings they were able to put by from their earnings in Mosul, where for two or three winters they have been to seek employment, and find food for themselves and their families.

From Asheetha I went with two men to Serspedo, another site of slaughter. We climbed out of the valley over the mountain ridge and descended into a ravine, which in about a couple of hours brought us to the village. On my road I saw the traces of an avalanche which had fallen the year before, the distance to which large rocks had been carried in its furious progress was wonderful, and they are, as may be imagined, very common in these mountains. Serspedo resembled the other two villages which I had seen; it hung on the lower slopes of a steep mountain, below was the rugged course of a stream, a chaos of rounded rocks and pebbles. On the other side rose a corresponding mountain. Its crest was a natural crenellated wall, under which were two grottoes, below the sides resembled the cone of a volcano, only instead of scorix and ashes, were crumbling *débris* of decomposed schist, here and there pierced by projecting points and slabs of slate. The summit was called "al-Kalah" or the castle, and it might easily be mistaken for one at a short distance. The people at Serspedo tried to dissuade me from going up to the "Kalah," as it was both fatiguing and dangerous, but when they found that I was determined to go, they objected to my hunting boots. I remarked that I had walked over several difficult mountains in them already, but they answered that this one was unlike all I had hitherto seen, and that unless I adopted the woollen sandals of

the country they would not give me a guide, as they were responsible for my life. So, not liking to offend them, I pulled off my boots, and tried on the shoes which one of the men took off his own feet; but although my feet are not very diminutive I found them enormous, and after trying several pairs, all of which were too large, a woman offered me hers which answered very well. These shoes are peculiar, a lock of long coarse wool is pulled out into a thick mass of the required length, as near the shape of a foot as possible; this is then stitched in and out all over with strong woollen yarn until quite hard, thicker yarn is knitted on the sides, so as just to lap over the toes and catch all round the foot. A woollen cord passes along the upper edge of the knitted sides, with the two ends brought out at the heel, and when the shoe is put on the cord is drawn tight to make the sandal close well upon the foot; the two ends are then crossed over the back of the heel, thence round the instep and back again, and finally tied tight at the ankle.

The villagers told me that the top of the "Kalah" was a favourite resort of the ibex, and showed me a very fine pair of horns from one which had been lately killed there, so that I regretted not having brought my gun. However my regret was not of long duration, for I soon discovered that I had enough to do to take myself up and down without any other incumbrance. Furnished with long iron-shod staffs the four of us, for we had now a lad to show the way, soon crossed the rough ravine, and before going many steps upwards I found myself on places where I never could have stood for a moment with a leather shoe; but the rough woollen

sole of my "tcharrooks" clung firmly upon slabs of sloping slate which I should have deemed almost impassable to goats. The ascent was so fatiguing that I had to do it in short springs interrupted with numerous rests. We had scarcely commenced our wearisome climb before the guide pointed out a human rib bone, soon after the bones of a child, then a skull with a sabre cut across it, and as we neared the caves the ground was covered with bones, "tcharrooks," potsherds, bits of woollen clothing and long tresses of women's hair. At last the man said, "we are under the caverns." But the rocks projected outwards so much that we had to swing ourselves up by holding on to the stumpy oak bushes which grew in the clefts, our bodies meanwhile hanging over a descent so deep that a false step would have been instant death. Here my guides, in their anxiety lest I should fall, exposed themselves to great danger by supporting, and assisting, me in clambering up. This I did not like, for had either of them been killed I should have felt I was the cause of their death, and I urged them not to mind me; but they said "what answer should we make if we returned without thee?"

By great exertion we reached one of the grottoes. The floor was covered with bones, articles of dress, broken earthen pots, huge wooden ladles, rifle clamps and sticks, fragments of sword scabbards, cartouches, hair combs, and a variety of other rotting remains; while in the hollows of the uneven floor was a black soil which had once been palpitating flesh and blood. No wonder the faces of my guides blanched and their lips set hard and cruel as they gazed at the ghastly sight.

In this place a number of Nestorians had sought a

refuge, others fled into the next grotto, and many more up to the pinnacled platform above which formed the roof of the cavern where I stood. Immediately in front of us, but considerably lower down, the mountain rose in another sharp peak like a spire, affording room for only two or three men to stand on the top. Here the Koords succeeded in establishing themselves, for, undaunted by difficulties of the position, they had endeavoured to storm the grottoes; but to reach them they had to use their hands in climbing as we had done, holding their daggers between their teeth, and their heads were exposed when they gained the mouth of the grottoes, so the Nestorian women dashed them down the precipice with a single blow from an earthen pot or a wooden ladle. Many having been thus destroyed without a possibility of retaliation, they attempted to gain the lower peak just mentioned. The first were killed by balls from the Tiyary rifles, but their bodies were used as a rampart by others, who, under cover of their dead comrades, built up walls of loose stones, and thus step by step gained the top of the peak and scattered themselves along its sides. Even here they were at a great disadvantage, for being much lower they could not see the Nestorians in the grottoes above, except when a marksman showed his head over a rock while firing at them. But they could see the roof of the caverns, and rained their bullets against it, in the hope of killing someone in the rebound. On the night of the third day, the Nestorians had exhausted their ammunition and their water, so that further resistance was hopeless, and they resolved to risk flight. At the last moment the women could not be induced to make the experiment; they preferred remaining where they were

to hopelessly rushing upon death. Fourteen men who remained unwounded left the caves in the depth of a dark night. Stealthily approaching the Koordish besiegers, they passed through the midst of them undiscovered, and, hurrying along till dawn over the brinks of precipices and through dangerous defiles, safely reached a place in the craggy mountains, whence the following night they entered the lower district of Berwary. Here most of them were taken and beheaded by parties of Koords stationed in the passes by order of the Pasha of Mosul. The Nestorians did not pass unperceived through the midst of their enemies, for at every step they dislodged the loose stones which rolled rattling down the mountain sides, but as the Koords themselves were constantly moving from one watch fire to another, in the darkness they mistook the fugitives for some of their own people. The lad who was with me was one of the few who escaped that night, and the only one of his family left. All his relations had been killed, either during the massacre or in the lower districts. I asked him how they could abandon their mothers and sisters to their fate, and he said that by staying with them they could not have saved them, for the women were so petrified by fear that nothing would induce them to move. Even the men regarded the attempt as hopeless, but preferred dying in an endeavour to save themselves than waiting patiently for the certain death which awaited them. For as they had expected the Koords entered the caverns and carried the height above next morning. Once there they spared not a soul; man, woman and child, were either shot, sabred or stabbed, or hurled headlong down into the abyss below, whither many of the mangled corpses were also flung. Greater

slaughter still was on the summit, where I was told the bones lie thick, but as there was a sheer wall of rock to scale I declined to go, not so much for the risk I myself ran, as I knew my men would take care nothing befell me, and on that very account I feared for them.

From where I stood I saw the river Zab far down the glen to the S.E. glistening in the sun like a silvery thread, and beyond, on the mountains of Baz, which towered over the range in which I was, could distinguish the black spots where trees marked the villages of Bitty, Ruintā, Nāvā, Kaléittsa and Māthā Kāsrā. I picked up a woman's little rusty clasp knife, which had been suspended by a bit of blackened leather, and one or two other little things as mementos of this place of blood, and with a heavier heart than when I came up, began to descend, which seemed a more dangerous feat than even climbing up. However I got back all right to my friends in the village, who were glad to see me return as sound as I went, and I confessed to them that they had been perfectly correct in the matter of the shoes.

I saw a man here who exhibited to me the scars and seams of the tortures he had suffered under Zeinir Bey, to discover whether he had any hidden property. He had been first beaten till senseless, on recovering he was bound to a tree by double twine round his forehead, chest, wrists, thighs and legs, which was twisted by sticks till it cut through the skin, and was relaxed and tightened again several times to renew the sensation of pain. He was finally branded across the face and over his body with hot irons, but was fortunate enough not to lose his head, a frequent termination of such scenes. I saw women who had lost the use of their hands and arms from having had

burning brands, flaming from the fire, bound upon them with green willow withies to force them to adopt Islam—a favourite argument with the Koords to obtain converts—and several men amongst the Tiyary bore the marks of severe gun shot wounds. It is wonderful from what hurts Asiatics recover without surgeons or medicine; by the rude practice learnt from experience they constantly get over in a very short space of time what, if it did not kill, would lay a European up for months. A Bedaween who was struck by a spear, which entered at the top of his shoulder and running under the muscles along the back came out at the loins, was immediately laid down flat by the women, with his face to the ground, one of them then stood on his back and pressed the blood out of the wound with her feet, some simple plaster was applied, and before a month was out the man was well. This I suppose may be attributed to the absence of inflammatory symptoms, in a people undergoing constant exercise, living mostly in the open air, and rarely indulging in the use of animal food. The oriental method of treating bad contusions in cases of severe blows or heavy falls, is I believe never practised in Europe, but is very successful: the patient is wrapped up in the reeking skins of sheep, stript off while yet warm from the newly-killed animal; the same remedy acts efficaciously on the swollen houghs of horses.

I remained only long enough at Zaweetha to partake of the indispensable breakfast and returned to Asheetha, where I visited the church, a wretched little vault which had been lately roughly repaired; the Koords had injured it greatly and pulled down some parts of it. The curtain of the sanctuary was drawn aside that we might see into

it—for no one can enter but the priests, when they are fasting; it formed a little recess with nothing but its holiness to recommend it. Indeed the only things worth seeing in the whole place, were the beautiful MSS., copies of the liturgy and gospels, written in Chaldean by Kasha Auraha, the Patriarch's late secretary. The old books had been destroyed by the Koords.

I left Asheetha by the northern end of the valley, whence we had a tedious ride up the barren mountain to the north, on the top of which was the fortified cavern, where the Tiyary district terminates. The descent was very rapid and wild, oaks began to show themselves in abundance, increasing in size as we got lower, and at the bottom we found a pretty little Nestorian hamlet called Aroosh, belonging to the district of Daoodiah. Thence we continued along narrow paths over well wooded mountains, the oaks of which yield the gall nut of commerce, and manna, until we struck upon a narrow ravine, in which are the villages called Gelamoon and Helamoon, lying one above the other, embosomed in walnut and poplar trees. Our road followed the bed of a mountain torrent, amongst blocks of serpentine and beds of slate; now the little rill was quiet enough as the greater quantity of the water had been turned upon the fields on either side, but it was evident that in spring a body of water rushed down sufficient to bar the entrance to the villages. Hedges of mulberry, thorn and vine grew so thickly on both sides that sometimes we had to stoop low upon our saddles to save our eyes from overhanging branches.

We proceeded to the upper village clustered in the jaws of a gorge, the sides of which rose in tall precipices of rock, above which again the mountains reared them-

selves to a considerable height. The oaks here were stumpy, probably from their branches being every autumn cut away with the leaves, to be stacked as winter provender for the sheep, while the rest served for fuel. The inhabitants, who were Nestorians, seemed to be much better off than their formerly independent brethren of the Tiary. Besides tilling their grounds they were occupied in weaving a strong woollen shawl stuff, for the manufacture of which they are renowned, and for which they find a ready sale to the mountaineers of the adjacent districts. They also make quantities of woollen "tchar-rooks," which are esteemed of superior durability and which they sell in great numbers to the Kotchars. They possess flocks of coarse-woolled, broad-tailed sheep, and common goats, but they had none with the fine silky hair like those of Angora and Cashmere, which are to be found in Bukhtan and amongst the Kotchars, although the country was well adapted to them. It was here that I had expected to find my friends, the English Consul and Mr G., but they only came next day. I was, however, well lodged at the Kiayah's house, who was very attentive, for he was under obligations to the Consul, and I fared sumptuously on meat, poultry, rice and honeycomb—in fact all that he had to give. Meanwhile I amused myself with shooting, or rather trying to do so, for the work was hard and fagging, and the birds very wild; there were however plenty of them; I flushed them in large packs, but got very few shots although I saw hundreds. I had a man with me, and even shod as I was in my woollen sandals, I came to ledges against which he had to press the point of his stick to afford me sufficient footing to spring from on to rocks less slippery. Falls I had plenty,

and got my hands and feet full of the prickly thorns of the gum-draganth plant. The next day I nearly lost my life. I sprang a covey on the brink of a deep gully which they crossed; I marked them down on the other side, but to get at them I had to go round the head of the gully, and when I reached it I found I must get over a bed of small, loose, decomposed slate sloping at a sharp angle to the top of the cliffs. It was an awkward place to pass, but the partridges, calling to one another just beyond, induced me to attempt it. I therefore stepped wherever points of rock burst through the gravel, poising on one foot until I found a secure resting place for the other. At length a narrow space, only a few yards wide, remained of gravel alone, which I tried to run across; but the loose soil gave way and I fell upon my chest with my gun at full cock underneath me, and slipped down towards the cliffs, over which the stones which I dislodged were falling in showers into the ravine below. I tried to stay myself with my feet, and grasped with my outstretched hands, but there was nothing to catch but a rolling mass. In spite of all endeavours I continued my downward course and I had now two fears, the one of falling over the precipice, the other of the triggers being touched by some of the moving stones, and the gun going off with the muzzles at my breast, in either of which cases I must have been killed. A rock presented itself, and I seized it with one hand, and dragged myself towards it till I caught with both; at this moment it gave way resting against my chest, and its weight sent me down still faster. When within a yard of the edge of the rocks I spied a little plant with a long tough root; I could just hold it betwixt the forefinger and thumb and remained suspended, and just as my

fingers were becoming tired I saw another of the same plants. I was now hanging by both arms, and commenced digging my feet into the bank of soil until they held, then cautiously I let go with one hand and moved my gun forwards as far as I could reach, so that if it did go off it could not touch me. By continuing with great care to dig one foot well in before I moved the other, and holding with my hands to everything that offered, I reached the firm rock in safety. As soon as I approached the partridges they flew back to whence I had come, without affording me a shot at them.

The Consul had heard of the existence of copper ores on a mountain at the back of the villages, and had employed a few men in digging to ascertain whether a vein, or lode, existed beneath the surface. His men grubbed a small hole in the clay between the rocks in which occasionally they disinterred detached lumps of copper ore of a few pounds weight; the quality of the mineral he found to be good, what I believe is termed native copper, and not a sulphate. The query was, however, whether these indications certified the existence of any continuous quantity at a greater depth. It is certain that the Koordish mountains are rich in minerals, especially iron, lead and copper, and possibly silver, but they require to be well explored by competent persons.

As my companions wished to go on to Asheetha, I accompanied them only as far as the "Kalah" above Aroosh, and agreed to meet them again at Amadiah. Instead of going straight down the valley which lay about S., I turned to the S.S.W., by the pass leading to Berwary, one of the wildest looking places I had

yet seen. The impression it gave was that the ravine had been formed by some violent convulsion of nature which had rent the mountain chain, leaving a narrow fissure bounded by black walls of rock. In about three hours we struck upon a small stream bordered by willows, which led me to the Koordish village of Ori. It had only lately been re-occupied, for the Tiyary, when in power, made such frequent descents upon it that the Koords had been forced to abandon the place. Here the valley opened, and oaks of large size were mingled here and there with carefully kept vineyards, which even at this late season still bore delicious grapes, of which a Koord presented me a basketful of white and black as I passed. In another hour we reached Bedoo, another Koordish village built where the valley closed in again. It resembled in all respects those of the Tiyary. Small flocks of sheep were grazing outside, and my guide pointed to them, saying they would not have been there in olden times, for so often as the Koords attempted to keep flocks, so often did the Nestorians capture them. Indeed a little watch tower had been built above the village to give the inhabitants timely warning of the approach of the independent Christians, who frequently swept down in large armed parties by Ori, past Bedoo to the villages of Berwary below, murdering every man and plundering everything they came across. -

From this we rode along a succession of pretty little cultivations and rich hedgerows till we reached Mai, the Nestorian village from whence, as I have before said, on my way up I went into the Tiyary country at Zaweetha. We made a short halt to rest the animals, and continuing

down the valley for a short space, we crossed, and turned more to the W., towards a line of low hills which ran nearly N. and S. As we ascended amongst brush oaks we looked down upon the now wide valley, stretching far to the S. in beautiful luxuriance, dotted with villages and abounding in fruit trees and poplars, through which ran a broad stream. Our road lay for almost two hours over white hills, when we descended into another rich valley, across which we struck to a Christian village called Khair, situated in the wooded roots of the high range opposite us. It was quite dark when we dismounted, the houses were mostly in ruins, only three were tenanted by families who had recently returned, for the oppression had been so great the previous year, that the people had abandoned the place after selling their ploughs, oxen and everything they had, to meet the rapacious demands of Kiritloglu Pasha. When they found he still asked for more, which they were unable to give, they fled to escape the certain consequences of his resentment.

The house I was in was wretched—a few torn felts were the only furniture, and the people themselves were miserable and dressed in rags, a peevish, sickly child squalled all night, and the noise it made, together with the incessant attacks of swarms of vermin of all descriptions prevented me from sleeping. I was glad on the first peep of dawn to leave my lair and take my gun, as the country around promised plenty of game, indeed I had scarce cleared the houses when I saw forty or fifty partridges feeding in the first newly sown wheat field. The ground, however, was too open to allow of my getting a shot, but amongst the copse further on I had

very good sport, as besides abundance of birds there was a good sprinkling of hares, and I surprised the people by killing at flying and running shots.

After enjoying myself for some time, I came back and ordered the animals to be saddled, and we were soon toiling up the mountains till we reached a large bleak expanse, which in spring affords fine pastures, and was the favourite summer resort of the old Pashas of Amadiah, of whose pleasure residences nothing remains but ruins; these however show that they were on a large scale. Above rose a tall point of a mountain which on the southern side formed a precipice—the Tarpeian rock of the Koords—whence, till very lately, the independent Governors were wont to have criminals cast down. We travelled along the ridge of the mountains for some time, and rested where a little spring and a few willow-trees afforded us water to boil our coffee, and shade from the sun; my guide meanwhile told me of the pomp and ceremony with which the Koordish ladies were escorted to these mountain tops, to enjoy the fresh air and the sight of the flocks in their spring pastures. It appears they were guarded exclusively by Christians, well armed and endowed with plenty of courage, to whom the Hareem were not afraid to show their faces, as the difference of religion was supposed to prevent the occurrence of love adventures betwixt the Christian guards and their fair Mohammedan charges. I believe, however, that it not unfrequently happens that a high Koordish dame deigns to bestow her tender regard upon some favourite Christian in her suite. We then began a very long and tedious descent; the path was fringed with pear trees, which had been planted as a public charity to regale the wayfarer

with their fruit. Finally we turned to the W. and threaded our way through a narrow defile, over which the rocks hung in large masses as though ready to fall and crush the passing travellers. Indeed the bottom of the pass was in many places choked with large blocks which had tumbled from above, and a rough causeway had been constructed sometimes betwixt the rocks, sometimes running over them, without which the place would have been impassable to animals. As it was it was bad enough, the descents were so sharp and slippery that I found walking much quicker and more agreeable than enduring the motion produced by the slow, short, laboured steps of the mule. This chasm and the pass leading from Asheetha to Berwary were the most gloomy and imposing defiles I have ever met, accustomed though I have been to the wild roads of Turkey. Springs began to trickle from the clefts of the rocks and soon formed a little rill, and as the gorge opened out, little gardens and fields formed a succession of narrow terraces. Immediately in front was the town of Amadiab built on the summit of a projecting and almost detached rocky crag. I, however, crossed to the southern side of the valley, and marching westerly until close to the town, turned round the mountains and proceeding southerly along their western face, marched over arid rocks until I reached a dell in which was a Christian monastery, with a few houses and quantities of orchards.

The so-called monastery is a nest of grottoes excavated in the face of the cliff; many can only be reached by a ladder; I was quartered in one of easy access although at the top of the dell, where the rills gushed up, which irrigated and fertilised the gardens below. There was

only one priest, Kasha Mendo, a widower with two nice-looking lively daughters, who busied themselves actively in the cares of the household, which for the mountains was a very comfortable one, for Kasha Mendo, who was my host, possessed several gardens and fields, and was decidedly the richest man of this little Nestorian community. Underneath the grotto in which I was lodged a room was built, and from its roof I entered my lodging; the roof was a flat terrace reached by a flight of steps, and there the family sat during the day. In front grew walnut and mulberry trees, whose branches screened us from the sun; there were also fig, apple and pear trees, and pomegranates and vines in abundance, in fact for a long way down the orchards formed a perfect forest. Several other grottoes were tenanted by the owners of the different orchards and fields, for the monastery is now only a convent in name. I daresay in old times the caverns were well peopled by hermits, but now the place is only inhabited in summer by families who come from the town to watch their fruit and till their lands during the fine season, and then leave at the commencement of winter. Next morning I sallied out after the partridges, but the ground was too bare, and the birds, always guarded by an old cock posted as sentry on the top of the highest stone in their neighbourhood, were too wary and led me many a fruitless scramble after them. One covey I thought I had marked in a capital spot by a big rock, behind which I hoped to steal unobserved upon them, so I ascended slowly and noiselessly till I reached the rock, behind which was a bush from which I heard a rustle. Making certain that it was caused by the birds running away as they are wont to do when caught

unawares, I sprang forward to flush them, and to my surprise up jumped an immense boar; he made one rush away, and then stopped and turned round to see what had disturbed him. Although I had killed many a hog on the plains when well mounted and armed with a steel-tipped bamboo, I did not like the look of his long white tusks. Knowing that small shot would only have the effect of whipping him into a fury, I made two steps back and placed the rock between us, over which I peered at him, ready to fire when the gun muzzles touched his head if he attempted to rush upon my breastwork. He too looked at me, and we apparently both came to the same conclusion—let me alone and I'll let you.—and turning his head straight up the mountain he dashed forward, sending a shower of stones and dust behind him. When I told the people of my adventure they declared it must have been a bear, and advised me always to carry ball as they were very numerous and frequently savage. But they were mistaken for I had hunted too many pigs to be deceived. My host informed me that he had killed three bears in the mulberry tree opposite the terrace on which we stood: they come at night to feed on the fruit of which they are very fond, and are then easily shot. Their fat is used instead of butter or sheep's tail to mix with boiled rice, lentils or chick peas.

In the course of the day I rode into Amadiyah to see what kind of place it was. Built, as I have before said, on an isolated crag standing in the mouth of the gorge down which I had come, it is only accessible on two sides, one gate facing south the other north. It is considered one of the strongest places in Asiatic Turkey, and is decidedly the most formidable of the Koordish hill forts

which I have seen, and has hitherto always withstood every attempt to carry it by force, although it has yielded to prolonged sieges through famine. Without artillery it may be considered inaccessible, and on more than one occasion has successfully resisted the cannons brought against it by the Turks. But this may be attributed to want of skill in managing artillery on the part of the besiegers, for it is commanded on more than one side from the adjacent mountains, which are sufficiently close for the long Koordish rifles to have told with deadly effect upon the Turks. Here remains of the Osmanli batteries are still to be seen, and their cantonments, protected from shot behind the brow of the mountain. European artillery, however, in three hours would not leave one stone upon another; for the wall is a simple curtain of slight construction, with abutting towers at the gates and angles. The parapet is crenellated for musketeers, and latterly a few embrasures have been constructed at the western end which forms a citadel, being fenced off from the town by a long loop-holed wall, in the centre of which is a covered platform for a large gun with a port-hole commanding the town. On entering the Ravendooz gate I passed through a dark elbow-shaped vault with guard rooms on either side, a few Albanians belonging to the garrison of Daood Shan's irregulars were lounging about and asked for a present, which I promised to give them on my return. The first building was the palace of the old Koordish Pashas, built on the line wall at the N.E. corner, and curiously enough the hareem hung over the ravine at the point most exposed to an enemy's fire; I suppose that the ladies might amuse themselves by gazing from their lattices upon the open country, and on

the comers and goers as they entered or left the town. In front of the palace were the remains of a large mosque, ruined by war and neglect ; the minaret, however, was solidly built and formed a fine object. The town I found in complete decay, the greater portion of the houses in ruins, and the bazaar miserable. Still a few stalls showed the printed cottons and handkerchiefs of Manchester, and shawls from Glasgow, dresses of Damascus silks, a few red boots and yellow slippers, one or two blacksmiths were engaged in making horseshoes, and the rest of the shops were chiefly occupied with vegetables, tobacco, and other such trifles. The inhabitants were mostly Koords, with a few Nestorians ; and a trader or two from Mosul had come to purchase gall nuts, a little honey, and wax, and possibly some sheep, which I believe constitute the whole of the export. I then entered the citadel, where a few militia, "topgees," or bombardiers, belonging to Mosul were quartered ; they were very civil and glad to see anyone from their native city who could tell them the news of the day. They had all suffered severely from autumnal fevers, for the air of Amadiah is pernicious, and although the castle is somewhat more salubrious than the level country below, still it is very unhealthy, and a number of troops die there every year. I was shown over the castle and saw its deep draw-well, powder-magazine and a great long brass cannon which had been brought there by Mohammed Bey, who dragged it down with him from Ravendooz with infinite trouble, when he besieged the place years ago ; not that I believe it aided him much, but the name of the thing was a great deal amongst the Koords. There were also a tolerably heavy gun and a few light field pieces which

had been sent there by Mohammed Pasha of Mosul, after he had at great expense and trouble obtained possession of the fortress; they were all very badly mounted on heavy wooden carriages without trucks.

On returning I was stopped by a man from the Mutessellim, or Governor, sent to invite me into the Serai. The place as usual was built in a hollow quadrangle cut up by a wall passing through the centre into two courtyards, the outer being the Divan Khanah, or public apartments, the inner the hareem for the women. The ground floor was mostly occupied by roomy stables and lodgings for servants; above, the accommodation was I thought rather scanty; however, the apartment I was ushered into was large, and had been a fair specimen of Eastern internal decoration, but it was greatly dilapidated. The carved and ornamented planking of the ceiling had fallen in many places, in others it was wet with moisture which drained through the neglected roof, and I found the whole place in the same disorder. The women's quarters were used for rice stores; the gay-looking doors, shutters, and lattices painted in the Persian style with flowers in vivid colours, were mostly broken, and some had been removed for firewood. The occupants were Turks, mere temporary residents, liable to be recalled at the pleasure of the Pasha of Mosul whose servants they were, and had therefore no interest in preserving and taking care of a house which did not belong to them, and the government will never repair anything. Palace, barrack, and bridge, all were mouldering uncared for to ruin, when a small expense would maintain them in order. One thing is certain that even were the government to grant funds for such purposes, little of it would ever be

bestowed on repairs ; the greater portion would find its way into the pockets of those who were entrusted with it.

The Mutessellim was the Cavaz-Bashi of Essat Pasha, the Governor-General of Mosul ; like most of his class illiterate and ignorant, but possessed of a certain share of the sharp cunning which distinguishes all the Eastern races, he well knew how to take advantage of the opportunity to enrich himself, by squeezing whatever he could out of the miserable inhabitants of the district he presided over. He was very civil, fearing we might carry tales to Essat Pasha, who was anxious that the province might not be oppressed, and who sought, as far as he could, to deal justly by the people confided to his charge. When I mentioned that I expected the Consul would arrive next day at the convent, he said he could not permit such an arrangement, as his own house and servants, and himself too, were at the Consul's disposal, and to clench the matter he despatched horsemen to meet him and bring him to his house. As he was so civil and his messengers so pressing, my friend had no alternative but to accept the invitation, although these are attentions that one would willingly avoid as entailing after claims to patronage. In the present instance the people had complained to me of many acts of injustice which they had suffered from the Mutessellim ; and I spoke to him regarding a rill of water, turned from the irrigation of some lands belonging to poor Christians and to which they had a vested right from time immemorial, in order to water some rice which belonged to himself, while the cultivations of the rightful owners, had been dried up for want of it. With the usual effrontery of a Turk, he said

that having nothing to occupy himself with in so dull a place, he had merely sown a few measures of rice for the use of his own household, without being aware that the water he was using was private property, but that as soon as he was aware of it, he had immediately restored it, allowing his own seed to perish. Now he must have known perfectly well that not only had I been informed that he had persisted in retaining the water, in spite of positive orders to the contrary from his superior Essat Pasha, whom the Christians had gone to at Mosul to pray for redress, but that he had obliged the Christians to cultivate and irrigate his fields without remuneration. So the land being free, the water stolen and the labour enforced, he must have made twenty or thirty times what he had laid out in the purchase of seed—a very profitable speculation. This little anecdote will give an idea how government is carried on in the remote provinces of the empire; for this particular instance is by no means an extraordinary one, nor is the Mutessellim at all more oppressive than his fellows—indeed less so than usual with his class—for he is acting under one of the most disinterested Pashas whom Turkey can boast of. But such is the system; it commences with the highest officer of the empire, and increases in petty exaction and severity as it descends the scale to the meanest *employé* in power; and this is why Turkey, with an immense territory of varied climate and rich soil, is one of the poorest and weakest countries in the world.

On reaching the gate on my return I found it closed by the Albanians, to remind me of the promised present, so I gave them a trifle and was allowed egress. Next day, as my friends did not appear, I amused myself with

running after the partridges, and on returning late in the afternoon, just as I had made myself comfortable for the evening, a message reached me after sundown to say that the Consul had arrived, and requested me to join his party at dinner at the Mutessellim's, as he intended leaving early next morning on his return to Mosul. I, however, was too tired to be inclined to move, and remained where I was till early the next morning when I started by moonlight and found my friends dressing, after which we had to wait till a splendid breakfast was served: it was very good and did credit to the Governor's kitchen. At last we started. And as we wound out of the northern gate and defiled down the steep sinuous path, we made a gallant show, for we were a large party and accompanied by the Mutessellim, who looked extremely well, dressed in a scarlet jacket embroidered with gold, with long hanging sleeves, his loose trousers were of blue cloth braided with black, his waistcoat was of striped silk, and he wore a coloured shawl round his waist. On his head was the crimson fez, and his boots were of red morocco; across his right shoulder was suspended his crooked sabre hanging to a red silken cord, and he rode a large spirited gray horse, which endeavoured to lunge out at everything that approached him. The Consul too was respectably dressed in the blue undress frock-coat of his rank, and bestrode a tall black nag, but his companion and myself were rather quizzical figures on our rough mules. When we reached the bottom of the hill, the Mutessellim wished us good morning and returned, followed by his men.

Our course for some time lay a little to N. of E. over easy mountains and on a good road, and for a while

along the bank of a small river. At first the country was bare, but as we advanced the oaks became more numerous and of larger dimensions, abundantly adorned with mistletoe, which is seen all over this part of Koor-distan. In about four hours we reached the foot of a high range separating Amadiah from lower Berwary, and halted to breathe our beasts before commencing the fatiguing ascent. The spot was very beautiful; we were at the entrance of a thickly wooded pass, down which a bright little burn was winding its rapid course. The ground was covered with rich sward, and behind us lay the waving undulations of the hilly district of Amadiah, bounded by the sharp peaks of the lofty mountains in the rear, while in front and on each side rose the great forests covering the range to which we were bound. While I was enjoying a quiet smoke as I sat on the roots of an old oak, an altercation arose betwixt my two friends. It seems that in all the villages through which they had passed, the people had crowded into the cabins where they had lodged, partly as a mark of respect, partly no doubt actuated by motives of curiosity. The Consul, who was a Chaldean by birth and therefore well acquainted with the languages and customs of the East, did not discourage these assemblages, but entered readily into conversation with the people. The same thing had happened to me and I had adopted the same system, partly because I was willing to humour my hosts, and also that in this way I picked up information on the state of the country, which I could not have obtained otherwise. But his companion Mr G. neither understood any oriental language, nor did he like the natives, and he complained that the Consul needlessly allowed these interruptions, and lowered

his dignity by permitting them—adding that he seemed to derive more pleasure from the conversation of the mountaineers than from the society of his friend. The Consul was a good deal nettled at these remarks, and retorted that since he preferred sitting by himself to seeing the people and being civil to them in return for their hospitality, his wish should be indulged when we came to our quarters for the night. I took no part in the dispute, but I could not help thinking to myself that it would be not only uncourteous, but very impolitic, to affront the wild mountaineers of these districts; and that it would be far wiser to put up with a little inconvenience by falling into their customs and usages, than to anger them by needless rudeness. The rest of our ride was very disagreeable, my two friends were ruffled in temper, and I was also in a somewhat gloomy mood, pondering how much better I had got on alone. As I rarely dismounted, however bad the road might be, I was generally in advance, watching the coveys of partridges which constantly sprung on either side of me, and thinking what nice shots they would make had I been on foot with my gun in hand. It was with no slight satisfaction that from the summit of a rocky steep I saw opposite me the large Koordish village of Ispindary, crowning another rocky cone only separated from us by a narrow valley, which was to be the termination of our unpleasant day's march. The more so that I had gained a good appetite from the mountain air and constant daily exercise, commencing at dawn and continued nearly without intermission till dark, and was indulging in pleasant visions of rice pilaff and boiled chickens, not to mention a hare and a few partridges which my servant had hanging behind his

saddle. I little thought how soon after reaching, I should have been delighted to have got safely out of the village again. We rode up, and our numerous company dismounted in a small open space in the centre of the houses, where a caravan or two of donkeys and mules, which had arrived before us, were encamped round some mulberry trees. My two companions and myself were led to a house on one side of the square, we mounted up a few steps to a leewan, or open chamber, of three walls, the fourth side being shut in by a low parapet about three feet high. Outside of this was the flat eave of the basement storey, forming a rude verandah, where a rug was placed for us to sit upon while the leewan was being swept and felts arranged on the mud floor to place our beds upon. At the further end of the verandah were a few branches, close to which I placed myself. When the man who had received us, and whom I supposed to be the agent of the lessee of the taxes of the district (from his wearing the European trousers and the red cap of the Turkish military costume, and from his speaking Turkish perfectly), good-naturedly cautioned me against going too near, as they were a screen to protect several beehives from the wind, and I might inadvertently disarrange them and draw down the wrath of their inhabitants—so I moved a little further off. For greater ease I pulled my pistols out of the shawl round my waist, in which I carried them, and laid them down on the carpet; they were not loaded, as I had fired them off at Zaweetha at the request of the Kiayah who had never seen percussion arms before, and finding the mountains quite quiet I had not thought it worth while to recharge them. My sword had been

taken possession of by my little servant Aboo, who was always most pressing to relieve me of it and wear it himself, in order to strut about the villages and "make himself big," as the guide said.

Presently our room being ready we stepped into it over the parapet, and placed ourselves each one on his mattress which for the nonce answered as divan. Not thinking of any mischance I left my pistols and tobacco bag outside on the verandah. We had scarce made ourselves comfortable when the villagers, as I had anticipated, came flocking in, and sat themselves down on their heels along the wall opposite, gravely saluting us by carrying their right hands to their breasts at the same time gently inclining their heads. The Consul returned the compliment very stiffly for the conversation of the morning was rankling in his mind, and he felt it incumbent on him to keep his word by turning our visitors out. So, as although he understood Koordish he was not fluent in it, he told our host in Turkish that he was tired and wished to be alone, the man interpreted it to the Koords, who answered not a word, neither did they stir. The Consul, whose position in a Turkish town is second to that of the governing Pasha alone, had been accustomed to see Mohammedan and Christian make way before him, and was excessively annoyed at his intimation being disregarded; so he continued in an angry tone, that not having come to be stared at like a wild beast he desired the room to be cleared immediately. The countenances of the Koords grew dark, and they slowly got up and left us. He then desired that the Kiayah, or headsman of the village, should come, as was customary, that he

might intimate to him what he wanted, the other replied that he was the Kiayah's brother, and as he spoke Turkish would act in his place and get us what we might require. The Consul, now completely lost his temper, refused to have anything to do with him and insisted on his fetching the Kiayah himself. The man retorted, "Who and what are you that you should domineer over us and turn us out of our own houses—have you any paper?" meaning an order from the Pasha, upon which he was shown the broad sheet on which Essat Pasha had enjoined all the governors, chiefs of districts and others, to assist the English Consul to the best of their power. He glanced superciliously at it, and as he still remained the Consul took him by the shoulders and tried to push him out of the door. The man turned round and grappled with him, at the same time bursting into a torrent of abuse and invective, in which my friend's female relations were very roughly handled. A Tufenkgee, or guard given him by the Pasha, now ran forward and seizing the Koord, for such he was, forced him down the steps into the square where they struggled together, and the Tufenkgee struck the man on the face with a whip. On this he called to the rescue, and I just stepped out of the door in time to see the villagers rushing out of their houses and down the hill, arming themselves as they ran with huge stones and rice pounders, like immense mallets with handles about four feet long and large heavy heads, being the weapons that first presented themselves. With these they assailed the unfortunate Tufenkgee, who had left his pistols in his holsters and his sabre on his saddle bow. The Consul little dreaming that they would venture to attack him, went to the rescue of his servant, but they

fell upon him and both were driven up the stairs into the room. I thought to myself at this moment that we had only escaped the bees to fall among hornets, and I saw at a glance we had got ourselves into a serious scrape, which I could not help feeling was mainly our own fault. However, there was not much time for thought, the infuriated crowd pressed in upon us drawing the daggers which every mountaineer carries. The Consul and the Tufenkgee retreated before them into the corner near the open parapet, G. to the corner furthest in, and I betwixt them against the wall. Three men came at me with uplifted daggers and another with a sword, however they did not strike, but menaced and abused me as hard as they could in Koordish, of which I understand nothing. Against the Consul they were much more violent; he was struck with stones and sticks, and crouched down to avoid the shower of blows, while the Tufenkgee, himself much beaten, tried to shield him by bending over him. Before he could do this two men cut at his master from the verandah outside, but as he was low down the points of their sabres caught against the wall and thus the blows took no effect. G. had a little double barrelled pistol which he held before him and kept the Koords back; fortunately he had the presence of mind not to fire; had he done so not one of us would have escaped alive. At the moment when, without arms, I was waiting for the first blood to be drawn and the whole of them to precipitate themselves upon us—for I fully expected that they would work themselves into a fury with abusing us until one more excited than his fellows would give the first stroke—a door suddenly flew open behind us and the women of the

family rushed in. Throwing themselves in front of us they formed a chain with their arms outstretched from one to the other, so that we could not be touched without wounding them—unless indeed they were forcibly thrust aside—and this would have been so gross an insult to the family of one of their own people that the Koords would not do it. They cried, and implored the men to let us alone, and after a great deal of trouble induced an old gray-bearded man to take our part. He made us get into an inner room the door of which the women and he guarded, the Tufenkgee stood immediately behind them with the Consul's sword in his hand—this and G.'s pistol were all the arms we had if it came to the point of fighting for our lives. An old decrepit hag now came upon the scene, cursing us, and inciting the men to take our lives, saying "an infidel European dog has dared to strike my son,"—she was the Kiayah's mother and considered by her countrymen as a female saint—in other words a she-devil. She literally screamed in venting her imprecations against us. Had she come while we were still in the open leewan, I verily believe we should all have been murdered, for she made the men much more furious, and they tried several times to push past the other women to reach us. But our defenders would not budge, and opposed themselves to whoever tried to get at us. At last the old man succeeded in making our assailants retire. As soon as they did so I walked to the leewan, as I did not approve of our position cooped up in a little place and shielded by women—it was decidedly undignified to say the least—when in came the whole troop again yelling worse than ever and the Tufenkgee caught me by the arm and pulled me back.

The same scene was enacted over again, until the Kiayah's brother, who had till then been most active against us, called out that they would not do us any further harm and that we might come out, so we did—and not one amongst them said another word against us. I was anxious to know how our servants had fared, for they were in the act of unloading the mules, and attending to the baggage outside when the storm broke, and I was afraid that some of them might have been killed. The women again had assisted them, and several had been dragged into the nearest houses by the female occupants, who bolted the doors. Nevertheless some of them had their heads and arms wounded with stones and sticks, one received two slight dagger stabs on the shoulder and arm, and all were much bruised and beaten. Of our party the Consul had his silver spectacles twisted and broken, one eye was swollen from a severe blow, and he had received other hurts. The Tufenkgee was very badly bruised and in great pain; I got only a blow from a heavy stick which was intended for my head, but as I turned to avoid it, it fell on the shawl round my waist, which was wound in so many folds that I did not even feel the stroke; G. was also scatheless. However, I believe we two escaped so well because really we had taken no part in the matter. The Kiayah's brother entered quietly into conversation with me as if nothing had happened, and gave directions for our dinner, he also observed that they had not been actuated by a desire to rob, and asked me whether I had lost anything; I said, yes my pistols and tobacco bag, which had of course vanished when I went to look for them after the row. He had them cried and, what was more, offered a reward for them, and restored them to me.

Some things belonging to the others were also brought back, but not all that was lost; indeed we ourselves scarce knew exactly what was missing. People came in to ask for medical advice and physic, and I translated their complaints to G., who was half a doctor, and he did what was necessary for them. I asked the Kiayah's brother how it was that he had adopted the Osmanli costume and spoke Turkish so well, and I found that he had been taken for a soldier and was a lieutenant in a regiment at Bagdad, and had come on leave for three months to see his family. Dinner came; the Consul had his head muffled up and would not touch it; G. was out of humour and partook very sparingly, and I had it all to myself, for not only did I really feel hungry, but thought it was better to appear quite cool and unconcerned, and to behave as though all had gone quite right. It was now dark and we were left alone to sleep, only the owners of the house, two brothers, lit a large fire in the leewan near the door, and sat by it fully armed to prevent anyone coming in. In the village other fires were lit, and we could hear groups loudly discussing all night, debating on the expediency of getting rid of us, to prevent our complaining to the Pasha when we reached Mosul. I had now my sword lying by my bed, and it was some comfort to think that if it came to the worst, I could die defending myself, which was better than being slaughtered in cold blood like a sheep. My little boy had cleverly hid it under his long dress at the commencement of the fray and as soon as he could slip into the house, he brought it to me. We then consulted what to do, for we feared that when we started in the morning we might be attacked at the moment of leaving. After a good deal of

hesitation it was agreed that, if possible, it would be well to send to the chief of the tribe and acquaint him with our position. On enquiring of our hosts we found that he was at a village only a few miles off, and we proposed that one of them should carry a message to him. The man refused, saying that were he discovered it would be worse for us, and that if it came to be known afterwards he and his family would be driven from the village; however he yielded to persuasion and to the still more convincing argument of a handful of gold. We were somewhat anxious as we watched him accoutring himself for the journey. The chains of his cartouche sling clashed at every step he made, as he went every now and then to the door to gaze out in the darkness and find out whether anyone was moving about. At last, although we could still hear voices talking, the villagers appeared to remain quiet at their respective watch-fires, and our messenger stole softly down the stairs. For a few seconds we heard the clink-clank, clink-clank of his cartouche chains, and then all was silent; I must say that I feared there was every chance of his being stopped, and I inwardly cursed the fashion of wearing such noisy appendages. I was tired and, in spite of the Koords, I fell into a deep sleep until the messenger returned with the news that his chief would be with us shortly after dawn, which was then approaching. It was broad day when a fearful yell arose, I went forward to see what was the matter, and found the villagers turning out from their cottages in war trim. Each man was now armed with a long rifle, his cartouches dangling by his side, a dagger in his belt, and a few had swords. As I watched them issuing forth I thought it was lucky that the night before we had been scattered

and separated from our arms, for it was evident that had we and our people used them, we should have had no chance against the force opposed to us, and although we might have killed some of our enemies not one of us would have escaped.

The commotion had been caused by the approach of their chief, whom they had descried coming down the hill with thirty armed followers, and immediately divining that we had managed to advise him of what had occurred some of the most outrageous were crying out to the rest to attack and destroy us, even though their Chief had come to our rescue. On the spur of the moment the people had armed, but they stood irresolute in small groups, and fortunately for us, the majority could not overcome the awe with which they regarded their hereditary chieftain. In a few minutes he was taking coffee with us, expressing his sorrow for what had occurred, and lamenting that we had not come on straight to his village, where he would have been delighted to have received us. He was no doubt sincere in saying so, both from the natural hospitality of the mountain chiefs, and because they are always too glad to have the good word of a European Consul with the Pasha. We immediately started, the Consul led the way, followed by the chief who was also mounted, the rest of us fell in, and our defenders closed round us, marching on foot on each side of the train of animals. In this manner we proceeded till we reached the boundary of lower Berwary and, as it was not etiquette for the chief to escort us beyond his own territory, we dismounted to take leave. He assured us that we might proceed in perfect safety through the adjoining district of Mizoory. On our

road we had frequently wound round the base of the mountains, through valleys where the narrow path was overhung with large beetling rocks where the swift-footed Koords might easily, by striking straight from their village over the mountain tops, have laid in wait for us; places from whence their unerring rifles would have picked us off in the midst of our escort without the possibility of our making a defence—and I was not at all persuaded that they might not try it. They however were otherwise occupied. We had no sooner got beyond view than they, misdoubting the consequences of their conduct, and fearing that their chief on his return might inflict summary punishment on them, or that in a few days the Pasha might send soldiers against them, removed the whole of their property up into the mountains where they concealed it amongst trees and in caverns, while they drove their sheep to distant spots, and themselves divided and scattered in different hiding places and villages. Before quitting us the chief asked the Consul whether it would be agreeable to him to have the village plundered and burned. He thanked him for the proffered civility, but requested him to do nothing until Essat Pasha's pleasure was known, adding that in any case he would not be willing that a fine village should be destroyed, its lands thrown out of cultivation, and women and children suffer for the fault of the men, but he would prefer having the principal assailants seized and severely punished. While we were conversing with the Chief, a handsome present had been given to his men as a recompense for their trouble. One of them whispered this to him and he immediately made them return the money. All our

entreaties could not prevail on him to allow them to retain it; he said he could not permit it and would regard our insistance as an insult. I was very much struck with this refusal to accept money, a very unusual trait in the Eastern character.

Going due west we travelled for a long time over a series of mountains, until we entered a richly cultivated valley watered by a rivulet which ran into the Gomel. There were the remains of one or two villages which had been deserted by their inhabitants to escape from the heavy exactions of the former Pasha. We halted at one close upon the stream near a ruined mill, and rested ourselves for a while under the shade of some fine trees, whose branches drooped into the water. Descending along the rivulet we soon reached the Gomel (the Gomela of Xenophon), a tributary of the Hazir which falls into the Zab—the ancient Zabates. It was wide but extraordinarily shallow, and we splashed through it, with the water up to the horses' knees in the deepest part; the vegetation of river-poplar and tamarisk on its banks was quite that of the plain. We then ascended a high mountain and came down into another little valley, the bottom of which was flat and laid out in corn-fields, and the sloping sides with vines. Going nearly south for a short time, we turned to the east through a nasty rocky pass, and going down the ravine of Sheikh Adi, debouched through the last gorge of the Koordish mountains, and were soon on a broad high road leading over the low hills of Sheikh Khan which soon brought us to the large Yezid village of Ain Sifny.¹ Threading our way through its narrow streets, down which water was

¹ *Ain*, eyes, or springs, in Arabic.

flowing in abundance from the numerous springs which give the name to the place, we were soon comfortably installed amongst our old friends the Devil-worshippers, rejoicing that we had left both mountains and Koords far behind us. As soon as our arrival was known, Sheik Nasr and Meer Hussein Bey, the one the religious, the other the temporal chief, of the Yezidi, came to welcome us, and to see that we wanted nothing. They were surprised to find the Consul's face so damaged, but we did not tell them of our mishap, and accounted for it by saying that he had struck himself against an oak tree, which might easily happen to an inattentive rider. They treated us as they always have done with the greatest kindness, and were very pressing that we should remain next day. But we were most desirous to get home, and starting at dark next morning, reached Mosul in the afternoon without meeting with further adventures.

As soon as we got in, the dragoman of the Consulate was despatched with the broken spectacles, to acquaint the Pasha with what had befallen us. H.E. was very indignant that we should have suffered such violence within two marches from the town. He gave orders that two hundred horsemen should start that very day to bring in the offenders, and sent messengers to the Mizoory Chief, Mahmood Agha, with orders to raise his tribe and assist in capturing them, and also to Abdurachman Agha to point out the probable hiding places of his refractory clansmen in case they had fled. In a few days the lieutenant and five others were taken and brought in, and I was sent for to identify them. I accordingly went to the Serai and took my seat close to Essat Pasha, who muffled up in a fur pelisse with a high standing collar

which reached to the top of his red fez, sat huddled up in a ball on his cushion in the corner of the divan, and reminded one of a grim old lion peering out of a bush. After I had taken coffee, repeated all the requisite compliments, and narrated to H.E. what had happened, he ordered the culprits to be brought in; three of them were old men with white beards, and all of them seemed dreadfully frightened. Three of the five were clearly recognised, the other two not. So I requested the Pasha, as we did not wish to punish any but those who were unquestionably guilty, to let them go—right glad they were to find themselves dismissed—the others were led just outside the door into the corridor, and in a moment came the sound of the strokes, as the sticks fell upon the naked soles of their feet, mingled with their cries for mercy. I continued smoking my pipe and talking to the Pasha until they were led away to prison; for besides the bastinado they were sentenced to sweep the streets in chains, a punishment lately introduced by the Turks, and greatly dreaded by the Koords and Arabs. The soldier was detained in prison until reference could be made to the Governor-General of Baghdad, and to the general in command, who immediately authorised proper punishment being made upon him; and I was again, by the Pasha's desire, deputed to be present. Being a lieutenant in the line, the civil authority could not touch him, and it was necessary that the sentence of two hundred and fifty blows and degradation to the ranks should be executed by the military power. Kadry Bey, the Kaimakan Bey, or lieutenant-colonel, of the regiment stationed at Mosul, was sent for by the Pasha, who read to him in my presence the orders from Baghdad, invited him

to carry them into effect, and requested me to accompany the Bey. I therefore went to his quarters in the same building, where I found the major awaiting us with a kourbash, or whip of hippopotamus hide, lying by his side. I then learned for the first time, that while private soldiers are beaten in the barrack-yard by the corporals with sticks on the soles of their feet, officers up to the rank of captain are flogged with a kourbash over the shoulders by the major, in the quarters, and in the presence, of the commanding-officer. The man was then brought in by two sentries, who were ordered to retire and close the door and allow no one to enter. The colonel then addressing the culprit pointed out to him the heinousness of his offence, as being in the Sultan's army and having been at Baghdad, where he had an opportunity of knowing the rank of European Consuls, he ought, instead of joining or heading the villagers to have restrained them. For even supposing that he had been wronged, his duty was to have complained to his superiors and not to have taken the law into his own hands, and that therefore he had incurred the following sentence. The major then got up and the man stooped forward and bent his head upon his chest, leaving his shoulders only as a mark for a whip. I only allowed him to receive one blow and declared myself satisfied, and he was marched out again.

The fate of the others was curious. Shortly afterwards cholera made its appearance, and especially attacked the prisons. We first heard that one of the Koords had died of it, then a second; and lest a third should also follow, the Consul requested the Pasha to release him, which was done immediately. But the Koords laid the death of the

other two at our door, and were convinced that we had caused them to be killed or poisoned.

Some three or four years before a body of Turkish officials sent by the Pasha of Mosul had been murdered at the same place, and irregular troops had been sent to punish the people who fled to the mountains, while the village was plundered of all the animals and copper utensils, and the young men were hunted down and carried off as conscripts. It was the memory of what had then occurred that induced the women to interfere in our defence, and caused the inhabitants to disperse and hide in the neighbouring hills and villages. But I would not advise any European who may hereafter visit that part of the country to pass by Ispindary lest the people there reckon blood with him.

MOSUL, 9th December 1847.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I have just returned from Bavian, to which I had some difficulty in finding the road. I started in the afternoon with fine weather, and reached Bahzany after dark. In the night it came on to rain heavily, and I started next morning with rain, and a high, cutting, cold wind which lasted all the day; and after a very disagreeable ride over the Djebel Makloub, (Topsy-turvy hill) and the Mizoory hills got to Bavian an hour after sundown, well wetted through. The village is situated on the Gomel (the ancient Gomela), at the point where the high range of mountain at the back of Sheikh Adi sinks into hills; it consists of three wretched houses whose inhabitants,

Koords, are in a destitute condition, and I had great difficulty in putting my horses and mules under cover. They had neither wheat nor barley, nor anything to eat but a little rice. Immediately opposite on the west bank of the Gomel rise the cliffs on which are the bas-reliefs. There are eight small tablets, each containing a portrait of a king about four feet high; and one very large, with a king on each side, apparently worshipping two priest-like figures standing, one on a lion, and the other on a griffin. Above this tablet rose a statue on two lions, but now only the paws of the lions are well preserved, and the outline of the head can be traced of one, but the statue is reduced to a square oblong block. I fancy it may have been a sphynx like those of Nimrood. In the river are two masses of rocks, with figures of priests or gods standing on the backs of animals. Other blocks are also in the bed of the river which may have once borne bas-reliefs; there is also a tablet on which the body of a bull can be distinguished, but very much defaced. There are places cut away as if to receive bas-reliefs, but they are now quite plain. As to the figure of the gigantic horseman described by Rouet, I could nowhere find it, yet I had the man who showed the place to him. It may be that it is so defaced that neither I nor the villagers could trace it; they swore there was nothing like the figure of a horseman, and that I had seen everything. Some of the small tablets are on the perpendicular face of the rock, others are reached by a narrow ledge. Where there was anything like a footing I trod with my Tiyary woollen sandals. But among all those I examined closely, as well as those I saw from below, there is only one tablet which bears an inscription; the whole

surface is covered with it, and it runs right across the body of the king, but is greatly defaced by holes having been bored into it, besides the general honeycombed wearing away of the rock from exposure to the weather. So much so, that although I have no doubt you, from your knowledge of the character, would have been able to copy it, I could not, and so I got Toma Shishman to take paper impressions as the only way of obtaining a proper copy. There is on the body of the king and in the centre of the writing a triangular inscription, I suppose a name, which I shall try to copy. The large compartment and the other with the bull are both bored into caverns, I am inclined to think excavated at the same time as the portraits were sculptured: the intention is obvious—they are tombs, and my idea is, that the bas-reliefs outside are the portraits of the kings buried within. The caverns are square in shape and flatly vaulted; on either side is cut into the wall a niche, to receive of course a body, though they are short for a corpse, being only about four feet long. But I imagine the bodies were crammed into sarcophagi similar to those of Nimrod, which the recesses are well adapted for. These tombs must once have been closed, now they have small doors and even windows, and those of the large compartment are numerous, and give the idea of a church. How I wish I could draw, the whole cliff would have made an extremely fine sketch. Without a ladder it is impossible to get into the large compartment, and I could not make out whether it was one large grotto with numerous windows, or several small ones, one over the other. I am disposed to think the latter. My idea is, that these bas-reliefs all cover royal tombs, with concealed openings (are there not such

in Persia, and does not Sir R. Ker Porter or some other traveller mention them?), and that at a later period these tombs were forcibly broken into and pillaged, and afterwards converted into dwellings, for which the windows were made. I think it not impossible that if the smaller tablets were broken into, grottoes intact might be found behind them, and I suspect that this is how the inscriptions have been injured. Small holes have been bored into them to break away an opening, but the attempt was abandoned without being completed. It would be worth while trying on a defaced tablet. At Matthaya also these caverns exist, as you know, but as I did not go into them, I cannot say whether they contain niches for the dead. If you think my ideas and train of reasoning absurd, don't laugh at me, for as you know I pretend to no knowledge on such subjects. I saw the various signs, and they clearly are representations of the sun and planets, as Rouet thought.

Kouyunjik is doing nothing, and the funds are nearly exhausted, which I am sorry for, as that blackguard Hoggia Hannah, the French dragoman, went to Sheriff Bey and told him that the authors of all the robberies that have lately taken place, especially of two Jews on the road near the brook Khauser, were some Jubboories living on the Tell, insisting very strongly on the necessity of imprisoning them all. Sheriff Bey sent for Mahmood Agha ibn-Haggi Jobeir, the Ashair Aghasy (officer charged with the police of the bedaween), and desired him to send out and capture these Jubboors. Mahmood Agha answered, "But these men are in the service of the English Consul and are employed in digging for antiquities." Sheriff Bey immediately understood, and exclaimed, "Then he has said this for

'nevsaniet,''' *i.e.* to spite the English. Hannah's object was clear. He wanted to bring us into disrepute by pushing Sheriff into making the matter a great affair, which was to end by our getting the name of protecting and employing a gang of murderers and robbers, and also by stopping the excavations. Now if we stop them the French will immediately say that they have forced us to do so. Rassam intends reporting the matter to the Embassy. It was not the French Consul's business to interfere with either us or our men; supposing what they say was true it was the Pasha's affair. You must know, too, that about a month ago Hoggia Hannah told the Pasha that Toma had cheated him (the Pasha) in the purchase of some cotton he had bought of him, by bribing the Kiayah to deceive him as to its real value in the market. The Pasha called the custom-house people, cotton dealers, etc., to enquire about the value when Toma bought it, and their answers satisfied him that Hannah's accusations were malicious. We were away then, and Toma wrote to us about it. On our return Rassam and I went to the Serai and told the Pasha that it was necessary for the honour of the Consulate that the matter should be tried publicly by a Meglis. If the charge was made good, Toma was no longer the dragoman of the British Consulate, but a simple rayah amenable to any punishment H.E. might think fit. The Pasha objected to this for fear the French might think he had done it to spite them, and begged that as he had already privately settled that Toma was not to blame we would, if we liked, write to the Ambassador without calling the Meglis, and then if the Porte asked him how the thing was, he would call one, which he said would undoubtedly clear Toma.

So long as Hoggia Hannah is French dragoman we shall have no peace.

Immediately after this Hannah accused the Kiayah of having received 20,000 piastres from Suleiman Agha of Mardin (this was because the Kiayah backed up the Chaldeans), and he was dismissed and has gone to Constantinople. But the Pasha told Hannah "open your eyes, Hannah; you tell many lies, but don't think if you have deceived me in this, your being dragoman will save you. You are always a rayah of the Porte. I have sent for Suleiman Agha and will try this point, and if you have told a lie I will see you are dismissed." The point was tried by a grand Meglis to-day and the Pasha addressed Suleiman Agha thus: "I dismissed you from Mardin, not that I was dissatisfied with you, but because the Mushir desired it, and I will give you a post, so do not think I am angry with you or be afraid of me. In the present case you are accused of having given a bribe of 20,000 piastres to my late Kiayah. You know by the Canoon (civil law) that both giver and receiver of a bribe are liable to the same punishment; but speak the truth. If you did give the bribe confess it, and I exonerate you from all punishment, but if you did not give it and say you did, may my bread which you have eaten prove a misfortune to you." Suleiman Agha swore by all the Mohammedan oaths that he gave nothing but the regular fees amounting to 9000 piastres. That, the Pasha said, was nothing, as it was customary and known to everyone, and then turning to the Cadi said, "Put him upon the Mekemeh (tribunal) oath," and then ordered Hoggia Anton and Karabet, through whose hands the money was said to have passed, to be called. Karabet was ill and could not come, but Anton swore that no such sum

had passed through his hands. The Pasha now intends to complain to the Porte, and the Kiayah, it is known, as soon as he reaches Constantinople, intends to petition the Meglis, setting forth that he has lost his situation and been disgraced by a malicious accusation of the French dragoon.

In Chaldean affairs the French have entirely failed. The opposition party are banded strongly together, and now that they know their strength are not to be moved in their determination to resist Moutram Yussuf's nomination as Patriarch, and he has been obliged to humble himself by calling on those he formerly threatened to oblige to kiss his shoes, and is begging and praying them to be reconciled and make up matters. He prepared a grand dinner for them which none accepted.

Sfoog you know has fallen ; he was shot by Gurjeioglu, whom Nedjib had sent ostensibly to assist him against Ayudah. Ferhan first fled to the Anizeh and then went "dakhil" as a petitioner to Nedjib, who arrested him and has invested Ayudah. Mahommed Emin is in prison for arrears of "miri," his Jubboors are playing the devil, they attacked Kesseh Kupry and stripped the Haitahs, and yesterday swept the country round Sai-amon and cleared the fields of horses, cows and sheep, down to the Ghazlani, which is scarce a musket shot from the Serai. Several people who were ploughing their fields were severely wounded and one was killed. Fifty Haitahs were sent after them, but they found the Jubboors so numerous that they withdrew, and were glad, by keeping in the valleys, to get back unperceived.

We have three travellers here. Geoffroi at the French Consulate, going as *chancellor* to Baghdad ; W. Barker,

a son of the ex-Consul at Alexandria, and a Mr Boulton, a rich young man and a neighbour of Henry Danby Seymour. Although only twenty-three he seems to have a good deal of talent and general information, and is studying Oriental manners and languages. In Arabic he is well advanced and is now reading Persian. He travels with a great deal of luxury and on the road is called "Ibn Malik" (son of a Prince), from his handsome tent, etc. He dresses in the Egyptian costume, and at most of the large towns passes from fifteen days to some months.

MOSUL, 2nd January 1848.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have just returned from a shooting expedition in the mountains and took the opportunity to pay a long-promised visit to Sheikh Nasr, the spiritual head of the Yezidi, or Devil-worshippers, of whom little is known. The great shrine of Sheikh Adi, one of the successors of the founder of their religion, lies in a narrow and romantic glen of the Koordish mountains about ten hours ride from Mosul, embosomed in a grove of magnificent trees by the side of a brawling stream, formed by numerous rivulets, which flows down towards the plain. All tunnelled with the tombs of long dead Sheikhs and with dwellings for the faithful when they come to worship, the mountains over-hang the temple on three sides and cast it into deep shade, save for a few hours at midday. The sun lingers longest on the graceful, fluted spire of the shrine, which rises high above the surrounding trees,

and was once covered with plates of gilt metal. Cupolas have been built here and there over the springs, one of which is peculiarly sacred, as it is believed to be fed by the water of the holy well Zemzem at Mecca. By a miracle Sheikh Adi caused it to appear suddenly in his wild mountain retreat.

The hereditary religious chief resides at Ain-Sifny, a village near the temple, whose vicinity he never quits. Hussein Bey, the civil chief of the Yezidi, is a little boy of ten, married to a woman of twenty-five, who really acts as his nurse. He came to salute me accompanied by his pipe-bearer, who had lost both hands and carried the pipes clasped to his breast by his stumps. When the Ravendooz Bey murdered so many of the Yezidi on the banks of the Tigris he took their Meer, Adi, to Ravendooz as a prisoner. There he struck off his head, and bidding his faithful henchman to hold out his hands cut them off saying: "Go back and tell your people what you have seen." The man never leaves the son of his old chief.

Sheikh Nasr, the present Patriarch, is an extremely intelligent man, singularly devoid of bigotry and most courteous and gentle in manner towards strangers. We made friends some time ago, and when he heard I was in the neighbourhood he sent at once to remind me of my promise and I was fortunate enough to fall in with one of the great religious festivals.

A spacious court-yard, surrounded with alcoves for the accommodation of strangers, led to an inner and smaller enclosure, which is used for religious ceremonies. At the opposite end stood the temple, decorated with rude designs of stars, combs, flowers, serpents and lions, mingled with inscriptions, in the Arabic and Cufic characters, from the

Koran. Inside the temple is divided by a double row of square pillars supporting low arches; the lateral aisles are much higher than the nave, which appears to serve simply as a passage. The numerous niches in the pillars on each side contain oil lamps, and the smoke has blackened the whole interior. The tomb of Sheikh Adi stood at the further end under a high cupola, and seemed to be a large wooden box ornamented with verses from the Koran painted in brilliant colours; but it was so swathed in costly shawls and scarves that little of it could be seen.

Near the entrance door of the temple, on the right hand side, is a tank of intensely clear water, which is also said to come from the holy Zemzem well. All who bathe in it are believed to be cleansed from their sins, and it is supposed that some form of baptism is connected with it.

The temple was once very rich and, as already said, the spire was entirely gilt; but that ruthless chieftain the Ravendooz Bey plundered the place and killed thousands of the Yezidi. He pursued them as far as Mosul, where the people were so afraid of him that they hastily removed the bridge of boats, and let the unfortunate Yezidi be slaughtered on the banks of the Tigris, imploring in vain that boats might be sent across to save them. Numbers of Christians were also killed by the cruel chieftain, whose exploits rivalled those of Bedr Khan Bey.

There are five festivals in the year when the Yezidi pray at the holy shrine. The most important one is in the autumn, when they assemble from the most distant parts, and each tribe has a separate camping ground and set of huts. Sheikharrees are on one side of the valley, Sinjarees on the other, and so on. The men are generally

clothed in white and wear black turbans, the women's dress is also white, but they have small skull caps, with silver coins sewn so thickly on them that the effect is that of chain armour. A black handkerchief twisted round the bottom of the cap completes this picturesque costume. Both men and women stick flowers jauntily on one side of their head-dresses, and occasionally a "zeboun," or long robe of striped Damascus silk, enlivens the monotony of the black and white.

During the religious festivals the lovely valley resounds with music and joyous voices. Thousands of people in holiday dress sing and dance under the big oak trees, while the high, plaintive wail of the "ney," or long clarinet, echoes from rock to rock. Groups sit round the professional story-tellers, who recite the life and good deeds of the holy Sheikh Adi, rousing their audience to enthusiasm or melting them to tears. Perpetual shots resound from the mountain paths above, as fresh bands of pilgrims descend and fire a salute in honour of the Saint. All remove their shoes as they approach the shrine—for it is holy ground.

At dawn the religious ceremonies began, in honour probably of the rising sun. Immense tambourines were beaten by the "Kawals," or priests, accompanied by young men playing on shrill pipes. Softly and sadly the music began, and worked gradually up to a tremendous crash of sound, when a Sheikh began to recite prayers accompanied by a continuous rattle of the tambourines. Men and women join in with most unearthly yells, apparently to prevent any of a different creed from understanding his words. At sunset and during the night the ceremonies were renewed, and there is one procession during which

all strangers are obliged to remain shut up in their quarters. It is said that the "Malik Taoos" or King of the Peacocks, is then carried in solemn procession. This is supposed to be a brass image of a peacock which represents Satan.

By special favour I was allowed to be present at one of the religious ceremonies—a dance in the inner courtyard by all the young men. They had their rifles slung over one shoulder and danced slowly and gravely, resembling dancing bears. Their toes were turned in and their hands were clasped in front of them, as they turned round and round, now advancing, then retreating. After some time they quitted the courtyard in single file, discharging their rifles at the gate as a final salute to the Saint.

The Yezidi have an intense dislike to the word "Shaitan," or Satan, and carefully avoid using any word resembling it. The favourite Mahommedan curse "Nāāl es-Shaitan" (curses on the devil) is to them a dreadful sin, and in former times pronouncing it was punished with death. They therefore never use the word "Nāāl" (curse), and a horseshoe "Nal" is not mentioned owing to its resemblance to the prohibited "Nāāl." A farrier is always described in some round-about fashion, as "Nalbant" (farrier) might imply a hidden insult to the devil.

Like the Mohammedans and many of the Oriental Christians, the Yezidi will not eat pork, and consider it unclean food; they also eschew the flesh of gazelles and think it sinful to hunt them, though they keep them as pets about their houses. Lettuces, bamiyahs¹ and some other vegetables are also forbidden food, and are con-

¹ Hibiscus esculentus.

nected with some absurd traditions. They accept no proselytes, probably from a fear that their religion, about which they keep the utmost secrecy, might be exposed.

Sheikh Nasr told me they consider Noah to be the first and the greatest of the Prophets, and believe that his spirit has appeared successively in the other Jewish Prophets, in Our Lord, and lastly in Yezid himself. The devil is looked upon as a fallen angel but as having been restored to power. I suspect though that this theory is merely put forward to excuse their fear of offending him. A singular belief of this curious people is that the angels will destroy mankind, and dwell upon the earth in their stead. Then Christ will take their place, and at length God will sit alone on His throne in the centre of the earth saying: "This is mine and all that belonged to it. All things were and have perished. I alone am eternal and all-powerful. I am the first and the last." After this no man knows what will happen—at all events the Yezidi will not say what is their creed or what are their ideas about the end of the world, about paradise, or about hell.

I told Sheikh Nasr that we all believed the author of good to be God, and asked him to whom he would ascribe it. "Also to God," he answered. "Then," I enquired, "whence comes evil?" In a low voice he replied, "If you have any regard for me ask no such question, neither try to solve it for yourself." This satisfied me that they believe Satan to be the incarnation of evil, and rather propitiate him through fear, to prevent his hurting them, than from any love they bear him.

From what I could gather from Sheikh Nasr the Yezidi creed seems to be based on that of Zoroaster, the founder of the Magian religion, with the doctrine of the two

principles, Ormuz the good and Ahriman the evil, mixed with Mohammedan and Christian superstitions. There is probably also a strong infusion of the tenets of that little-known sect the Tchirah Sunderan,¹ or Torch-Extinguishers, of Asia Minor. Once a year the men and women of that creed assemble at night in underground caves, and celebrate rites resembling those of Isis. They are said to tie a cock on the top of a pillar close to a burning torch, and then to indulge in the wildest revelry. The terrified bird tries to escape, and finally extinguishes the torch by the flapping of his wings, when a scene of mad debauch continues till the break of day.

The Yezidi are excellent agriculturists, quiet and well-behaved, a fine handsome race, civil to strangers and hospitable. But they live so much apart and are so reticent, that it is almost impossible to know them at all intimately.

In the Yezidi village of Ain Sifny the storks have the peculiar habit of building their nests inside the houses, which are all on the ground floor, instead of as is usual on the roofs, and they walk in and out of the door as though the whole place belonged to them. This is a cause of great perplexity to the Mussulman mind, for, holding the Yezidi to be an accursed race, the Mohammedans cannot understand how a bird they consider to be almost sacred should show greater sympathy and trust to such infidels than to orthodox Mohammedans, on whose houses they only build on the highest point. For this reason the storks generally select the palaces of the greatest families. In many cities of Asia Minor charitable

¹ *Tchirah* is resinous pine-wood, commonly used for candles or torches. *Sunderan* means to extinguish.

bequests have been left to shelter and feed those storks, which, from malady or injury, are unable to accompany their brethren on their annual migration at the approach of winter. The birds are placed in Khans, or Caravanserais, selected for the purpose, where they are fed with scraps of refuse meat and walk about like tame geese, and are taken care of till the others return.

MOSUL, 10th January 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

First let me hope that you have shaken off your fever and enjoyed your Christmas and New Year amongst your friends in England. Moutram Yussuf was secretly made Patriarch on Christmas morning when no one was present but the native bishops, Trioche and the padres; but it remains to be seen whether the Porte will give him a "Berat." There is a fresh move as to calling in Mar Shimoon and breaking altogether with Rome; we shall see how it will end. Trioche and the Padre Superiore having carried the election have started for Rome. You will have heard that Essad Pasha has been named Valy of the new Ailet of Koordistan; it is big enough, for it embraces Diarbekir, Mardin, Djezirah, Hakkary, Tiary, Sert Bittis, Van and Moosh, and the headquarters of the army. The seat of government is Ahlat on lake Van, now a mere village, but under the Armenian monarchy it was a place of importance. As Koordistan will be one of the most interesting Pashaliks in Turkey, with an extensive Persian frontier, the Government might not be

indisposed to put a Consul there, and I have some idea when I go to England, if they have not already thought of it, to suggest it to the Ambassador and the Foreign Office.

In the corner of Kouyunjik nearest Mosul, where I am now digging, plenty of sculptured figures are coming out which may perhaps lead to something, but I must soon stop for the funds are coming to an end. I had wished to write you a long letter but I find myself at closing time, so must curtail my epistle to these few words.

MOSUL, 24th January 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I was indeed sorry to see by your letter of the 10th December that you have suffered so much from illness and fever. I used to wonder when you exposed yourself day after day, and month after month at Nimrood, how you stood it. A long letter I wrote you on my return from Asheetha has been lost by the robbery of the post near Osmanjik. The excavations are much more promising than they have been for a long time past. I am digging in the S.W. corner, and half tablets of chariots and horsemen are coming out in regular series, and apparently leading to something good. But the depth of the trench is tremendous, and with the few men I have the work proceeds slowly. Pieces of very fine inscription come out but not a single one perfect as yet. In the enclosure under Kouyunjik to the north, a man while ploughing struck a stone; he came to me and I had it dug out. It

is about three feet in height, shaped like a tombstone; at the top is a figure with all kinds of emblems over his head, amongst them the guardian angel, and inscriptions run right over the whole, but unhappily the right corner has been defaced by the action of rain. Be-hanged if I do not think it is an Assyrian tombstone, because the figures and emblems are so like those of Bavian; besides the shape and size, and the fact that a large portion of a thick clay sarcophagus came out alongside of it. It was erect when found with a good deal of brick work on the sides to support it. Above where I am digging at the Tell, over the Assyrian ruins, are strong remains of building in stone and lime, and just under them in the earth, a Sassanian coin of mixed metal came out—apparently bronze and iron. It is clear there have been several palaces on Kouyunjik; the one I am now at is quite distinct from yours; and on the east side of the Tell in the gully facing the mills, Toma showed me fragments of yellow bulls. Now the people of the country say they have always known the greater portion of the relics that have been found since they were children to have come out on the north side of the Tell, and particularly betwixt that side and the ruined village near the centre, and also in the flat enclosure on the north, below the Tell, where the present stone (the tombstone) has been found. So I am persuaded that all four sides have been built on. I am at the last gasp for funds; however I shall not stop with such good indications before me. If I did Guillois would certainly carry my unfinished trench on, and if it did lead to anything it would be vexatious. Therefore I shall if necessary advance 500 piastres upon the chance of its being allowed.

The Chaldean affair is in suspense, waiting to see whether the Porte confirms the election of Moutram Yussuf as Patriarch. As one might have supposed he is quite in the hands of the French, and renders himself more unpopular day by day. Kasha (priest) Petrus told me that if things continue as they now are, he will leave the Chaldeans and go to the Armenian or Syrian Catholics, who have made overtures to him. In fact, all the best and most respectable amongst the Chaldeans will drop off. The animosity between the two parties burns fiercer than ever, but I suspect the Turks will yield to the French in the end.

MOSUL, 20th March 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

You will probably still find me in Mosul, indeed I am beginning to doubt whether next winter will not also find me in Mesopotamia. I cannot desert Rassam until he finds an assistant, and so far he has been unsuccessful. Your instructions about excavations came very apropos, for as I wrote to you I had knocked off work altogether. Now I have recommenced with Fat Toma and six men, but that fellow Shaheen Agha gives us a lot of trouble, always rowing the workmen and telling them to stop on account of his wheat, of which we have not hurt more than half a "souznah," and this in recompense for the 500 piastres you gave him at Constantinople.

As soon as I got your letter I sent off Mansur with mats, ropes, platform, and rollers to Kalah Shirgat to get workmen from Abu-Drubboo at Sinedig, but he is as bad

as the rest. When he got there I believe he conspired with Abu-Drubboo, and sent back to tell me that the Jubboors would not engage at five piastres a day, which I knew was a lie, for they are dying of hunger. I immediately engaged twenty men here at two and a half piastres, although Mansour's messenger tried to prevent me, and offered to get men at Sinedig at the same rate. It was a great pity, for five days of beautiful weather has been lost and now it is pouring in torrents.

Wedgy Pasha, as I told you, is here, and has established "Tanzimat."¹ He has received a strong Vizierial letter ordering him to elect a new Patriarch in the room of Moutram Yussuf. He has had long secret conversations with our dragoman Hoggia Toma how to accomplish this, and Toma, besides giving his own opinion, sent Hoggia Abdurrahim to him by night, and the priests were also consulted. Wonderful to say the secret has been so well kept that the French have no inkling of what is brewing. The result is that Wedgy has sent an express to Essad Pasha at Diarbekir, with a copy of the "Mektub Issamy" (Vizierial Letter) to desire that he will summon the bishops of Djezirah, Mardin and Sert, to Diarbekir, and inform them of the orders of the Porte, and if they refuse to instantly elect one of themselves, an express will be sent to Mosul, and the congregation will be ordered to forthwith elect another Patriarch. In this Vizierial letter it is mentioned that Mar Zia will not be reappointed because he sought refuge in Persia, instead of applying to the Porte; and for the same reason Mar Shimoon is deposed and a new election by the Nestorians desired, but as you know this cannot be done.

¹ The new Constitution given by Sultan Mahmoud.

Zeiner Bey is under guard at the barracks and is to be sent to Berwary. Fancy my astonishment when his wife, her mother, and a Nestorian nurse and child arrived at my house and established themselves there. They remained about ten days. I thought it funny, but did not like to say anything. They say she is rather pretty. Fortunately, as you know, my house like most here is double, with an outer and an inner, or hareem court, where she established herself. Ayudah is near Mosul, and seems disposed to keep a good police. Of 160,000 sheep which some of the Shammar carried off from the Baghdad territory he has got back 100,000, and sent the chief, who took them, and another man, in irons to the Pasha, who in return has lent him troops to assist in recovering the remaining 60,000. The Shammar caravans are constantly coming into the town to supply themselves with wheat, and we have driven a good business with them, bartering against salt and wool.

MOSUL, 17th April 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

The Kalah Shirgut stone will cost a good deal more than you thought ; something over 2000 piastres. I had to send men from this, and going and returning, and the heavy rains they encountered, made the labour alone a considerable sum. Then the raft men refused to take it, as at first arranged, in one of the goods "kelleks" as they passed down, as they estimated its weight at six to seven cantars, and said it ought to be the first thing to be put upon the raft, and they would not consent to stop at

Kalah Shirgat to unload a portion of the bales and reload, as they were afraid of the Arabs, so I had to get a separate raft. Mansoor is very stupid, and managed very badly. At Kouyunjik we have got into two sides and a portion of what has been a magnificent hall, but, unfortunately, dreadfully destroyed as usual. The slabs consist of a double series of tablets, representing the return of a triumphant army, principally chariots and led horses moving along the bank of a river, with palm trees in fruit in great abundance. The river is full of fish, tortoises and crabs. This all leads to a castle, also on the river's bank, out of which are proceeding men and women on foot, in ox-carts, on camels and mules, bearing presents to the conquerors. Near the castle is a field of millet in full bearing, and across the tablets are the remains of inscriptions; in the army two of the circular models of towns are carried—also broken. In fact, of the whole there are only two pieces which can possibly be moved, and these are doubtful; a woman and a child on a mule, and the castle. The ground is so deep that we are digging in tunnels, breaking a hole here and there to give light; the roof is six or seven feet thick.

The news of the French Republic came upon us quite unexpectedly; that Guizot would fall I had long expected, but such a regular turn-out was very unlooked for, and we are waiting for news impatiently. The new Pasha gets on very badly with the French; we, on the contrary, are very well with him. He has set his face against the protection system, and I hope he will succeed in breaking it down. He is very bitter against Rawlinson for supporting Nedjib Pasha, who he declares to be all that is bad, and I don't think he is wrong, and thinks that the appoint-

ment of Abdy Pasha, as Mushir (Field-Marshal) of the new Ordou (Province) of Irak and Hedjaz, will lead to the fall of Nedjib—very likely, and very much to be desired.

MOSUL, 15th May 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Your ideas on the consequences of the French revolution are exactly what I said from the beginning. If the leading men can establish a strong Government, the peace of Europe will be preserved, but if they have reason to fear the masses, they might plunge the nation into a great war, to divert attention from themselves. The movement in Germany is, however, decidedly favourable to peace, for it cuts off from Russia two great allies, and leaves her the only absolute Power to face constitutional Europe. If the King of Prussia succeeds in his ambitious scheme of confederating Germany under himself, what a splendid nation he will form. Europe might then be easy as to Russian encroachments westward. You have no idea how intensely the people here are interested in these European changes, they watch for the posts with as much impatience as ourselves. Amongst the Mussulmans it has created a restless feeling, a hope that the day will come when they may fall upon Europeans and Rayahs. Trade has suffered very much, and the Mosul traders will be great losers.

The excavations go on as usual, chambers that have been magnificent, but are destroyed. My Assyrian tombstone I am keeping here on the chance of your coming to

Mosul this summer. I shall probably leave before autumn, as my father is so pressing for my return. I should have preferred waiting till next spring, as from his letters I can see that there is no opening in Malta.

20th May. I was very glad to get yours from London of 27th March, as it holds out prospects that the Trustees may carry home the whole of your discoveries, and that your drawings are appreciated. Guillois has found a bull with an eagle-headed figure in one of the little mounds near Khorsabad. It appears that the very heavy rains washed away the soil and exposed a portion of the bull, and the people told him of it. It is, however, no real discovery, as he himself told me the Tell is so small that it cannot contain more than a gateway leading to the principal building found by Botta. I have just come from Kouyunjik, where the excavations are regular catacombs, and in spite of the perforated skylights, I had to examine some of the slabs by candle light. All is very much destroyed; it is a great pity, for otherwise they would have been a very fine suite of rooms. The only things that I may succeed in saving are—the woman on a mule, the castle and millet field, two separate led horses, with the accompanying soldier to each, and a pair of beautiful horses' heads belonging to a chariot, a little procession of figures, a woman, two prisoners manacled and a soldier driving them with his uplifted sword. There are chariots and palm trees by dozens, one or two castles assaulted by the king in the act of drawing his bow, scaling ladders, men and headless corpses falling to the ground. In fact, just like the Nimrood ones, but completely charred. They might be drawn, but not

removed. I think I shall begin in a new place altogether, on the chance of getting something better preserved.

29th. I have been to Nimrood, and pointed out to Behnan the pieces he is to move. The slabs you buried and which have begun to reappear, I directed to be well covered over. Some of those which you left exposed have been wantonly injured—the two priestesses on each side of a sacred tree have had the eyes and noses defaced, and the same has been done to a priest on the other side, which was one of the best that remained. I did not like to take upon myself to have the whole covered up as the expense would be considerable. If you wish it done write to Rassam, as I shall have left Mosul before this will reach you.

What say you to Reshid Pasha's fall and the Russian offensive and defensive treaty? Rawlinson thinks that as the blow is aimed at France and England it may lead to squabbles. Wars and rumours of wars will soon be rife enough for good people to think that the end of the world is drawing nigh.

SAMSOON, July 1848.

MY DEAR MARY,

I write you a few lines to say I arrived here all safe after saying good-bye to Mosul for good and all. I came with "suridgees," or postillions, changed with the horses at every post, over the great hot plains of Diarbekir with cholera raging everywhere. After leaving Malatiah the "suridgee" asked me whether I would go by the usual road or take a short cut, warning me

that it was very rough riding. Of course I chose the latter, and about midnight began to feel very queer, so dismounted on the brink of a small stream, a tributary of the Tigris. I always carry some brandy with me and as I never touch spirits in an ordinary way, a few gulps revived me, and I peered through the darkness and listened for the footfall of the horses to find out which way my "suridgee" had gone. He had been very nervous all the way on account of robbers, and, telling me to follow straight down the stream, had ridden on with the baggage horse. Mounting I followed a track which suddenly ceased at a large rock jutting out into the river, so I retraced my steps, but could find no other path, and drawing my pistol fired a shot, and then another, thinking the man would hear and answer the signal. Then I heard voices among the bushes near by, and reloading my pistol rode towards the voices and found an encampment of a caravan of donkeys resting for the night. One of the drivers told me that the road lay in the bed of the stream, so I went back to the cliff which had stopped me, and determined to allow my horse to take his own way. Down he went into the water, splashing and sliding over huge boulders, and after crossing and re-crossing from one side to the other of the torrent, finally he left it and clambered up a rugged steep more fit for a goat than a horse. At length the road was reached, and spurring my tired beast I got him into a hand canter, and rode into Kebban Madem just in time to see my baggage horse being led out of the courtyard of the post-house. "Where is my 'suridgee'?" I enquired. "What! are you the infidel who was murdered down by the river," exclaimed the man. "See here is your baggage, not

a cord has been touched, and I am just taking it to the Cadi who is to put his seals upon it." My "suridgee" had made up a fine story about robbers and many shots, and all the dangers he had undergone in order to save my valuable baggage, and was much disconcerted at my appearance which convicted him of rank cowardice.

On riding up to the Consulate here, I found that all the servants had been changed since I passed through here four years ago—none of them knew me. So I told them to tell Guarracino that Ross had arrived from Mosul, left my baggage, and rode straight to the bath to wash away the dust and the fatigue of my ten days' ride. I have been chatting with him all the evening and to-morrow morning at eight leave by the steamer for Constantinople.

MALTA, LAZARETTO, 13th August 1848.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I left Mosul on the 17th July and reached Samsoun in eleven days; I should have done it quicker but met a good many detentions on the road, and from Hassan Tcheleher to Amassia was encumbered with guards, as the road was so unsafe from the Rushvan Koords, that Ashkar Ali Pasha of Sivas had given orders that all travellers were to be escorted, and without guards the Menzilgees (Postmasters) would not give horses. Cholera was very severe at Anah, Deir, Aleppo, and Orfa, but so far had not touched Mosul or Baghdad. I met the first case at Mezirah, and found it very bad at Sivas and it had been worse; one hundred and fifty deaths a day,

at Tocat thirty to forty deaths, and just after I passed it reached Amassia. On board the *Eria* from Samsoon to Constantinople we had a death, and cholera still lurked about Constantinople, and was commencing at Smyrna, so the quarantine has just been increased to twelve days in the lazaretto, which for my sins I have to endure. Sir Stratford Canning received me very politely, but was evidently much preoccupied, and moreover had forgotten me so entirely that he thought I was dead! He said: "I was so sorry to hear that the young gentleman who went to Mosul some years ago and dined with me here had died there." I was puzzled as you may suppose, and said I was not aware that any young Englishman had died anywhere near Mosul, but H.E. insisted that he had talked to him and liked him, and knew he had died. It then flashed across me that it was myself, and I told him I had been near dying but had stopped short of actual death.

If you have not seen the *Bombay Monthly Times* for May get it, and you will find that at the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society they have made the wonderful discovery that the remains found by *Major Rawlinson* at Nimrood, are of the time of Darius Hystaspes! and that the figures on the black marble obelisk were probably copied from the Egyptian!! So much for learned societies.

I sent the tombstone to the British Museum before I left. I could not copy the inscription, it requires one who is well acquainted with the writing to hope to do so. Fancy at Kouyunjik, on the last day I was there, fragments of what must have been a barrel-formed terra-cotta cylinder with very small and beautiful inscrip-

tion came out, but only fragments. I told Toma to search diligently for the rest.

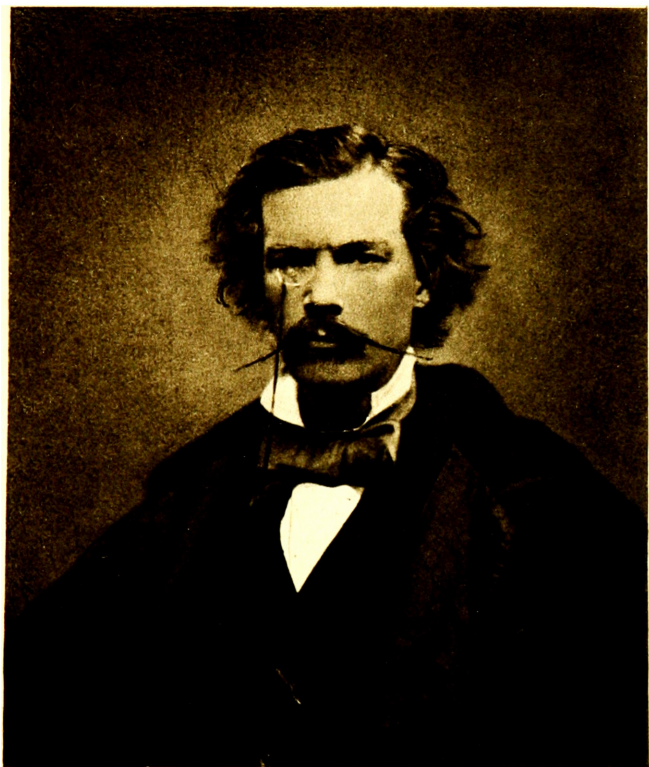
I shall probably go to England in the *Hecate*, of which my brother is a lieutenant, and do hope I shall be in time to see you before you leave. Guarracino wants me to enter into partnership with him at Samsoon, where, he says, with my assistance, he would be able to drive a flourishing trade in grains, dyes and wool. I should not dislike Samsoon, but my people are very much against it; they want me to vegetate here, but as I have never cost my father a penny since I was seventeen I do not want to begin now.

[1849 was passed by Mr Ross in England and in Malta; when he again left for the East and joined Mr Guarracino, English Consul at Samsoon, as commercial partner.]

SAMSOON, 21st January 1850.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have just arrived here, and as a steamer is going off I write at once a few lines to let you know that I have terminated my wanderings for the present. We left Constantinople on the 18th at two o'clock in the afternoon, next day we had a fresh breeze on the weather bow with a tolerable sea; running out of the bay of Eregli (Hercules) it was sufficiently cold. The following morning we were at Sinope—as we ran close along shore we saw the snow down to the water's edge, and the white slopes of the mountains broken by the brown trees of the great forests—the mountains themselves are



M. J. Ross.
From a miniature 1849.

disruptured masses thrown together in chaotic confusion. It was very pretty. When I came on deck yesterday morning I found all the low land about Sinope bare of snow, the turf brilliantly green, and a glassy sea on which rested quantities of water-fowl lazily floating about. Twenty-three ships were lying in port, and the weather was delicious. Some remains of the naval disaster still remain to tell of the fight—a corvette cast away in low water—a mast here and a ship's ribs there. On the green sward above the batteries were numerous black streaks where the Russian shot had ploughed a path. We remained at Sinope all day and I went over the place. New houses were being built amongst the ruins of former ones, and in that part of the town which was not destroyed by the Russians, the houses showed here and there where a cannon shot had burst through or where a shell had exploded; angles knocked away—timber and plank riven—all remained unrepaired. What a pleasure it was treading the thick elastic turf. It did my heart good and I strode over it at a pace as I felt my feet spring beneath me, which made my companions remark that I had long legs. In the shade the ice formed in thick plates, and yet the air had the soft balmy feel of one of your best spring mornings. To-day there is a good deal of wind, and the breeze falls sharp and penetrating from the snow ranges behind and around us. In the streets all is hard frozen, but Samsoon and the Sivaz hills are quite clear and bright green. I hear there are plenty of woodcock, and hope soon to visit my pet woods and favourite willows, and bag some of the bonny brown birds. The house I have not yet seen. I am writing just as I land at the office on the beach.

SAMSOON, 13th March 1851.

MY DEAR MARY,

We rarely get a book here. I am reading "Monte Christo," and anything is a God-send; when one has finished *Galignani* and the *Mark Lane Express* there is nothing else.

When I last wrote to you I was embarking for Sinope where I remained about five days; I had often landed for a few hours but had never stayed there. It is rather a curious place and has been of some consequence, but is now desolate looking, and the whole occupation of the population consists in building a few ships and coasting craft. Once it was a great city where dwelt Mithridates, and everywhere fragments of columns are seen cropping out of the ground, built into the wretched-looking houses, or forming the headstones of the Mohammedan dead. In the walls of the fine old Genoese castle wall, which surrounds the portion of the town inhabited by the Turks, are the almost erased remnants of Grecian bas-reliefs, and amongst them are Latin inscriptions of the Roman Hadrian. Everything showed that the decayed city of rickety plank dwellings, black and rotten from age and neglect, had been adorned with magnificent temples and public buildings. Even after the Mohammedan conquest it must have got back some of its ancient splendour, if one can judge by the appearance of a fine and large mosque and shrine where lie the ashes of the early Turkish sovereigns; it has been repaired by order of the present Sultan, just in time to save the edifice, for its roof had fallen in and the rest was threatened with impending ruin. The Genoese

castle is the most picturesque of all I have seen, and you know there are many in this country. The walls are high and imposing, broken by differently shaped and pretty towers; on the sea face there is a ditch and several lines of bastions, but earthquakes have rent its strength, some of the towers bend forward from their base, and huge fragments of rock-like masonry have rolled down and fallen into the sea. The first day I was much interested in going round the walls, examining the town, and paying visits to the Pasha, Russian Consul, and the quarantine doctor, and the time sped by. But the second day was very heavy; snow fell and it was very dull; the third was worse, and when the Turkish frigate came in I was happy to escape from such a monotonous place. There were no horses to ride and no birds to shoot, in fact nothing to be done. Guarracino and I, our cavass and servant, were lodged in the Capuchin convent (by convent you must understand a small house with four or five rooms of which one served as the chapel). There was no fire-place and the weather was cold, so we had to warm ourselves as well as we could with a charcoal brazier; of being asphyxiated there was no danger, for plenty of fresh air came up through the bare planks of the floor, and in at the ill-fitting windows. Fortunately we breakfasted and dined with M. and Mad. Mercenier, the Austrian Steamer's and Consular Agent, a good kind of man, but not very bright; she was a nice little person. Both are young, and born and bred in Constantinople, and have seen nothing of Europe, properly so called. Had it not been for them we should have fared badly and passed our evenings miserably. But they were a God-send to us, and so it seems we were to them; husband and wife had become

hypochondriacally melancholy and our visit brightened them up. Another Consul had just got hold of an Ionian vessel which had put into Sinope under general average, and was regularly eating her, and the cargo of wheat, up, with his expenses and fees, and Guarracino, as English Consul, went to Sinope to see what the fellow was about, and they finished by having a grand row. The Consul had put forward another man to manage the affair, and there was no doubt collusion between them, and when Guarracino told him the person he had appointed was a rogue, he took it for himself, and answered that his forehead was clean, and he could carry a bold front before all the world. Indeed, he was so ready on all occasions to suppose himself taxed with roguery, that no reasonable doubt could exist that he was precisely what he was so anxious to make one believe that he was not. At last Guarracino, pushing him very hard, got the answer, "*Je suis un grand homme, mes actions sont grandes et je viens d'une grande famille,*" then after a pause, recollecting no doubt that we knew everything about him, he added "*mais déchue.*" When Guarracino told him not to speak like a child, as such nonsense went in at one ear and out at the other, he began to cry like a baby before us, his family, and servants, and said he did not think Mr Guarracino had so hard a heart as to wish to see him and his family thrust out into the streets to beg their bread. The answer was: "When you can reason like a man, and can understand the value of words, I will speak to you; so far from wishing to do you harm or to hurt your family, I warned you that you had been imposed upon and advised you as a friend to tax the expenses. If you do so I shall drop the matter, otherwise, I shall make my remarks in writing, and send a copy of my despatch to Constantinople."

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A nice specimen of a Consul! The worthy people of Sinope were not a little surprised to see him in tears before the English Consul.

I am always hard at work in the garden before breakfast when the weather permits, for we are having a regular Samsoon spring. The winter was fine and dry, but now constant falls of snow and rain make the country knee deep in mud, and the hills which I see from my bedroom window are white with new snow. Guarracino is planting an avenue of planes, elms, etc., up through his grounds to the house, and in a few years it will have quite an English look.

[Mr Briggs, who was in business in Egypt, had for some time wished to induce Mr Ross to become his manager, with a prospective partnership, in Alexandria, a position not much to his liking, as hitherto he had been his own master. But his father wrote so earnestly to advise him to accept the post that at length he joined Mr Briggs' house, and remained in Egypt until the outbreak of the Crimean war in 1854. His old friend Mr Guarracino then begged him to return to Samsoon, being quite unable to grapple with the enormous amount of business—contracts for animals, corn, hay, wood, etc., etc., for provisioning the army—that had suddenly arisen.]

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, 4th May 1852.

MY DEAR MARY,

Yours was the first news I had of Layard's being member for Aylesbury. I am happy to hear it; it proves that he is rising on Fortune's wheel and I think he will

know how to profit by the opportunities which are offering themselves to him. The day before yesterday I reached this from Cairo, delighted with my trip. When I got upon the Nile I thought I was again by the Tigris with the Mesopotamian plains stretching before me; my mind was carried back to old days and old scenes, and many faces crowded fast on my memory. My heart swelled, I could almost feel "Merjan" flying beneath me, my left hand grasping the reins, my right swaying the spear. With a few jungly islands, and the bold line of the Koordish chain of mountains, it would have been perfect. The "barrage" of the Nile is a superb work, a worthy monument of engineering skill, spanning that wild race of mighty waters. Far in the distance rose the twin summits of the Pyramids of Ghizeh, no novel object, as my mind was familiar with their appearance. Then came the garden of Shoubrah, the Pasha's river steam fleet, dahabiehs, or Nile boats, their white expanse of graceful sail swelling in the breeze like the wings of a sea-gull; then the quaint, tumble-down edifices of Boulak, their latticed balconies of many patterns tottering over the brown waters of father Nile; then the Transit quay, up the high flight of steps to gain the bank, into an omnibus! And with four greys at full gallop, along high embanked roads shaded by avenues of fine "Lebbek" acacias, past rich gardens and verdant fields on either side, through the tall portals of European fortifications, past Saracenic mosques and Arab minarets of beautiful design into the Ezbekiyeh, an immense square laid out in fine gardens cut by carriage drives and walks, and fenced with hedges of pomegranate and myrtle, to the British hotel. There I had a warm welcome from Mr Briggs, who had secured me a large room on the shady

side of the huge quadrangle with windows upon a garden. It was late in the afternoon so I dressed and went down, and Mr Briggs introduced me as a great traveller, and an intimate friend of Layard's, to a host of people. Among others to Colonel Melvill (military secretary at Bombay), who was going next morning to Ghizeh with a party, and he allowed Cassidy, Ogilvie and myself to accompany him. The ladies started at five and drove as far as Old Cairo, and the two young men and I made outriders on donkeys. We crossed to Ghizeh, where all mounted donkeys, and away we trotted and cantered with janissaries and Indian servants as escort, the ragged donkey boys screeching behind us, through groves of date-palms, and broad fields of grain and lupins till we reached the sand, across which at a little distance we came to the sandy hills upon which are the mighty masses of the Pyramids. I will tell the truth, however; I did not think them so immense when I stood at their base. The great Pyramid especially covers so much ground and slopes upwards in such beautiful proportion that the mind does not grasp its magnitude. But the stones of which it is built and which seem so commonplace, on inspection are found to be enormous, and one then begins to discover what is the size of the mass which has been reared. I walked round its base and learned its dimensions, then got up to the portal, and from that walked along the edge with two Arabs, to the angle up which I was to ascend. I scarcely liked the footing along the ledge of the course of masonry which made my path, hanging over a height much too great to be agreeable. Then began the ascent: each Arab grasped one of my hands and dragged me up the steep incline and over the tall grades of stone, until

my knees lost their strength and my chest its breath. I halted in a kind of grotto a long way up, perspiration streaming from every pore, my lungs labouring, and I turned dizzy when I looked down at where I had come from, and gazed upwards at what yet was to be surmounted. Again went the scramble up and up, until I sat on the great stones at the top, placing myself in the centre, where I could not see the sides of the steep I had just climbed. I preferred looking at the stretch of the desert, the further Pyramids of Abou Seer and Sakhara, the Nile with its verdant belt, the groves of Cairo, and the blue dome and tall minarets of Mohammed Ali Pasha's new mosque, standing on the citadel hill, a prominent object seen far away. I felt dead beat. At last came the descent, and as I stood on the extreme pinnacle and prepared to descend the first huge step of the gigantic staircase and saw the little pigmies below, I clutched my two Arabs with most earnest grasp, for one descends with one's back to the Pyramid, and the idea of being precipitated headlong down its side was by no means pleasant. All I know is that when I did get down my knees were powerless, and I had great difficulty in walking. I was never so tired in my life. We then rambled about among the tombs which were nothing particular, and then went to the Sphynx. It is a magnificent thing. A hasty glance at its mutilated features conveys nothing, but when one gazes long and earnestly upon it, its beauty dawns upon the senses with a feeling of sadness and surprised admiration of the extraordinary race which created these unparalleled monuments.

We then had breakfast on a ledge over the portal which leads to the entrails of the artificial mountain, and

each recounted his or her impressions and experiences. I went in, and it was as much as I could do to stoop sufficiently, and yet get through its steep descents and ascents along difficult ways into the chamber where is the sarcophagus of that ancient monarch Suphis, or Cheops. I did not enter, much less ascend the second Pyramid, which is at a sharper angle and at the top has still the smooth casing left. We then went to Colonel Vyse's tomb, another nervous undertaking. Through the sand of the desert sinks into the rock a fosse, in a quadrangle of 75 feet deep and several feet wide; across this, and uniting the two walls of rock, is a wall a few feet wide but some 7 feet below the level of the desert, and to get down upon this bridge and to walk across it, and clamber up on the other side is disagreeable, for on either side yawns a horrid grave for him whose foot should slip. When you reach you find yourself upon another broader wall girding a square, cut down 50 feet deep, and in the bottom of this great tomb lies an enormous square sarcophagus of black basalt, its lid sculptured as usual into a gigantic mummy. It is so large, and the depth is so great, that it is impossible to raise it, and so it remains in peace, an unattainable treasure to the many museums desirous of possessing it. I was very glad to have seen this extraordinary sepulchre, hewn as usual on a scale which no other nation has attempted to imitate, but was also glad to find myself safe across its perilous bridge, which reminded me of the one suspended over hell and leading to paradise, across which the children of Islam have to pass, and from which the wicked tumble into the bottomless pit. We then went back to Ghizeh and visited the hatching ovens; one has to get in through a hole called

a door, but which, being too low for me to stoop down to, I dragged myself through on hands and feet, and the ladies got through as they best might. There was much fun as the different figures scrambled through such a dirty place, and the operation had to be repeated twice, for the oven is in a second apartment, and there we looked through a circular aperture into a huge oven with hundreds of eggs in it, and actually witnessed the chickens being hatched and toddling out of their shells. The whole affair was very amusing. We then went over to Rhoda Island and visited the new palace of Hassan Pasha Kiayah. Such magnificent rooms with marble fountains and gilded ceilings, silk damask hangings, Parisian furniture, and glorious chandeliers and parquet floors. In one angle was the Nilometer. It is an open well with a marble column of great antiquity, nothing extraordinary beyond its age and the mystery which once surrounded it. That finished the day.

Next day was appropriated to official visits, but most of the big men were in especial council at the Abbassiah, the Viceroy's palace outside the town on the skirts of the desert amidst the sands. I went to Shoubrah; such a pretty garden, such roses, it was beautiful; and the bright bee-eaters were darting about and perching on the sprays, their tropical plumage glinting in the sunbeams and greatly enhancing the gay aspect of the scene. The marble pavilion, with its sheet of water and centre island and rich boudoirs, was a sight worth seeing, and when lit up by its gas lights and reflecting flashing waters and gilded roofs, it must be like what the "Arabian Nights" tell us of. That day I was presented to the Viceroy, Abbas Pasha, who speaks no European language, and as no

dragoman was at the moment present I opened the conversation. As H.H. speaks the plain unlettered Turkish I was at my ease; he was extremely affable and gave us pipes worth a small fortune, so beautifully were they encrusted with brilliants. Then Nubar Bey,¹ one of the Interpreter Secretaries, came in, and Edhem Pasha, Minister of Commerce. H.H. was very animated and extremely irritated against the Porte. I was introduced to him as Mr Briggs' deputy, "Wakeel," son of the Consul-General of Holland at Malta, and the friend of the late Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and as likely often to come up to Cairo when the house had affairs to transact; and in this light H.H. was asked to receive me. The Pasha said he would be glad to see me whenever I came as the representative of "their father, his friend" Mr Briggs. I afterwards sat a long time with Edhem Pasha, who of his own accord mentioned my father and said how civil he had been to him; he is a jolly old fellow and not

¹ Afterwards the well-known Egyptian Prime Minister Nubar Pasha, one of the most remarkable men of his time. He began life as interpreter and secretary to Mohammed Ali Pasha and held the same post under his successor and son, Ibrahim Pasha, whom he accompanied to Europe several times. After the death of Ibrahim, he became the trusted counsellor of Abbas Pasha and negotiated in London the construction of the first railway in Egypt. Said Pasha named him director of the Egyptian railways and then Minister for Foreign Affairs. Under Ismail Pasha he became Prime Minister and bore an active part, not only in the history of Egypt, but of Europe. He came of a remarkable Armenian family, his father, Meguerditch Nubar, was *chargé d'affaires* at Smyrna, and later the official agent of Mohammed Ali Pasha in Paris. His uncle Bogos, the confidential friend and servant of Mohammed Ali, summoned Nubar to Egypt in 1842 when he was only seventeen, and one of his brothers, Arakel Bey, who died universally regretted at Khartoum, was the best Governor the Soudan ever had.

wanting in brains. Then we went to Ismail Pasha, aide-de-camp to the Viceroy, and one of the chief military officers, having held the cavalry command in the Syrian campaigns. As he knew nothing of any European language and no one else was present, I stood interpreter the whole time.

Next morning I went up to the Citadel in the first flush of day, and visited the mosque of Mohammed Ali Pasha. Like those of Constantinople it is exquisitely wrought, the dome is green and gold in rich fretwork and its walls are of Oriental alabaster. In one corner is the tomb of the old man himself. We ascended one of the minarets up an almost endless flight of stone steps, but were well repaid by the scene which unfolded itself from the summit.

It was yet early morn, the atmosphere was cool and clear, no heated dust was yet floating to obscure all things beneath its suffocating veil, the "city of Victory" lay in its length beneath us, its Saracenic domes and minarets standing high amidst its closely packed roofs. On the one side stretched the desert and the barren range of the Mokattam; amidst their roots rose the tombs of the Memlooks, beautiful in their peculiarity; on the other the groves and gardens in bands of green, then the broad river dotted with sails, beyond that another belt of green, then the wide white sands and desert range of the Libyan hills with the Pyramids. Then we emerged from the Citadel gate and wound round the battlements, and looked up at the parapet whence Elfy Bey,¹ the Memlook, sprang

¹ The only one of the Memlooks (chiefly Georgian and Circassian slaves) who escaped the treacherous massacre at the Citadel where they had been invited to a great dinner by the Viceroy, Mohammed Ali Pasha. As the last Memlook entered the courtyard the great doors were shut to

his horse to escape the carnage where fell the pride and strength of that stern cavalry, down to the great mosque of Sultan Hassan, a fine old building. The portal is, I should say, 50 feet high, sculptured deep with the honeycomb fretwork and elegant tracery characteristic of the style. But like all else decay was creeping over it, and its aisles seemed deserted and sad. After breakfast we called upon Stepan Bey, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Nubar Bey, who by the bye I don't think liked me the better for having been able to converse with the Viceroy alone; Linant Bey, the chief engineer, who was extremely civil and showed me a drawing he had made of a group of twenty-five sitting figures in a circle. They are believed to be portraits, very ancient, and yet as excellent as those of the best days of Grecian sculpture, their eyes were perfect copies of nature in enamel. They have been lately discovered at Sakkara by a Frenchman excavating there by orders of the French Government, and Linant Bey showed me the drawings, as the figures themselves had been either cased or reburied in the sands. In the afternoon I rode out with Ogilvie to Heliopolis; we went for an hour and a half on donkeys through a beautiful

prevent any possibility of escape, and they were shot down by Albanians stationed on the surrounding roofs. Elfy Bey rode his horse at the parapet wall and sprang over it down into the open space below. The horse was killed and his rider broke his leg, but managed to crawl into an Arab hut where he was concealed. Eventually the Bey was pardoned and became a faithful adherent of Mohammed Pasha's family; so much so that when Abbas Pasha was murdered by his Circassian slaves, he concealed his death until he had proclaimed his young son, and turned the guns of the citadel, of which he was governor, upon the city. It was the English Consul-General who persuaded Elfy Bey to submit and to open the gates to Said Pasha. He died a respected and devoted servant of the Viceroyal family.

farm belonging to Mustafa Pasha, one of the sons of Ibrahim Pasha. The road was shaded by trees, there were olive plantations, luxuriant fields, and horses and cattle at pasture, and had not the trees been occasionally curious one might have fancied it Italy instead of Egypt. It then became late and we turned back without seeing Heliopolis, its obelisk, or the petrified forest beyond. Next morning early Ogilvie and I went out to the tombs of the Caliphs, such a desolate scene; there amidst the sands rose up scattered domes and minarets, the mausoleums of those proud men, now deserted, a real city of the dead. In one enclosure we saw the tombs of the leading Beys who were slaughtered by Mohammed Ali in the Citadel. The chief wife of Murad Bey lay there also, some kind hand had planted a creeping plant by her tomb, it trailed once round the column and then fell languishing, fit emblem of those who lay below, and yet the watered earth gave token that it was cared for. It is curious to see how often in the East poetic feeling breaks through the rough shell of an Oriental heart. We also visited the tombs of the family of Mohammed Ali, all under one vaulted dome, the graves resplendent in green and gold, the floor covered with rich carpets upon which many readers were chanting forth verses from the open Koran before them. Passing into the town we saw a strong regiment of regular cavalry exercising. They were finer men, better set up, and better mounted than I have yet seen in these countries. Mr Murray¹ came in that morning and Mr Briggs and I lunched with him; and now I leave you as this has brought me late into the night and the weather is close, so good-bye for the present.

¹ Hon. C. Murray, H.B.M.'s Agent and Consul-General.

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, 7th May 1852.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Through the stupidity of the Post-Office people here I only got your kind letter of 20th April after the mails for England had closed. I am glad that what little I have been able to tell you has interested you and shall continue to keep you informed of what passes here. I have only just returned from Cairo and was much pleased with my interview with Abbas Pasha. He displayed much more energy and observation than I had expected from the accounts generally given of him. This too was the impression made upon Colonel Rose, who from all he saw and heard returned to Constantinople fully convinced of the slanders and falsehoods by which the Pasha had been maligned. Colonel Rose's short visit I think on the whole will have been beneficial to the cause of Egypt. I found the Viceroy highly irritated against the Porte and its conduct towards him. Fuad Effendi has shown himself a clever diplomatist, and has fully done his duty as a servant of the Sultan in the way he has managed the negotiations with the Viceroy. He seemingly gave way and left the question an open one to be reconsidered seven years hence. While yielding this much, he got from the Viceroy a promise that all capital punishment should be referred to the Sheikh ul-Islam, thus absolutely gaining for his Government the most important point of the whole. The Viceroy conceded it, I believe, to finish the difficulties. Then Fuad said he had no full powers and must refer to the Porte, thus gaining one step and yet keeping the question open. This is what I

believe Mr Murray and Colonel Rose will try to upset again, reducing the arrangement to the simple one of supreme power being left with the Viceroy for seven years more. Sir Stratford will, I imagine, back the Porte in her endeavours to get full hold of Egypt. Abbas Pasha bitterly remarked to me (by the way he was delighted to find I spoke Turkish) "They on the other side of the water allow no merit to the rulers of Egypt that she is what she is, but maintain that nature rendered her thus and placed her in her present flourishing condition. Have they forgotten the wretched tribute which she paid when under the Memlooks and Khorshood Pasha (3000 purses I believe), one-half of which remained due, 'bakiyah' (*i.e.* unencashed), as it was impossible to collect more than the other half at one time, and now they are not satisfied with 50,000, and yet will not allow that my grandfather Mahommed Ali has rendered the country capable of paying such a sum and that I, following in his steps, am ever working to increase her prosperity and develop her resources. Have they forgotten that they have two pashaliks, Baghdad and Mosul, watered by two large rivers and possessing a climate like that of Egypt, which are in misery and insecurity? How is it that they have not opened roads and extended canals between these two rivers, and made the land fertile? Is it an impossibility to open a communication between the Euphrates and the Orontes and establish water carriage from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean? Are they not ashamed at the disorder on their desert frontier? Are they unable to put a bridle upon the Arabs and to render the villages secure? I have never seen those countries, but when Daood Pasha passed through on his

way to Mecca, I learned quite enough to be ready to offer the Porte double the revenue it now draws from them, if they will invest me with the government of Baghdad and the country watered by the two rivers."

I was quite surprised to find how accurately Abbas Pasha knew the features of the country and the state it was in.

I do not know Egypt, for capitals, as Alexandria and Cairo may both be called, are not the places to judge of the condition of the people, and so my opinion is crude; but such as it is, I am persuaded that the state of the Egyptian peasantry is very preferable to that of the Turkish Arabs, indeed I am convinced they are gathering money. I must close but will write by next mail. Come out some day; this is a most interesting country.

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, 16th May 1852.

MY DEAR MARY,

I had not time to continue the thread of my tale in my last, and now go on. On the morning of the 28th April, or rather at two in the afternoon, we all started in a great dahabieh for Bedr es-Sheen, the village nearest to the Pyramids of Sakkara. We raced up the river, our sails swelling in the breeze, and old yellow Nile rippling in tiny waves off our bow, a merry and delighted party, a delicious day, and all in high spirits and ready to be agreeable, and pleased with all we saw. We glided past mud-villages, date-groves, strange cultivations, queer craft, and towards sundown we ran up to the shore where we

grounded most comfortably. As the boat settled in the sands she grew steady as a rock ; a bridge of planks was rigged out with side poles to the sand flats, to afford a safe and easy way to the land, and we all started for a walk to acquire an appetite while dinner was preparing. As we met with no path we trudged along over the sands to the barley fields, then got amongst acres of camel thorns which made the ladies much to exclaim ; but as my feet were encased in something stronger than thread stockings and sandals, I was quite unconscious of the sharp prickles which so spurred the ankles of the lady pedestrians. On these occasions little miseries are considered fun, and we all went back in high good humour to our boat, and did full justice to the repast spread upon her deck. I and the other two young men spread our cloaks upon the deck, while the ladies and their two papas occupied the cabins. I slept sound until shortly before dawn, when I rose and found it quite cold, and so did the others as one by one they turned out to prepare for the excursion. Our donkeys, which we had started ahead of us from Cairo, appeared on the beach in the grey of early dawn and off we went at a hard canter, the Arab boys screeching and screaming each at his own beast. We crossed the fields, entered into the date-groves surrounding the village of Bedr es-Sheen, and amidst them found the prostrate Colossus of Rhamses, or Sesostris. A most noble face he has, chiselled in that calm repose so characteristic of Egyptian sculpture, and which reminded me strongly of the features of the great King-headed lions of Nimrood. In the vicinity were some other specimens of sculpture, but they were as nothing in comparison to the Colossus, for the features

were broad and flattened, as is always the case with those carved over the dead. This is evidently with an object, for at the same time the statues of living personages fully showed the acquaintance of the old Egyptians with more perfect art, and the Greek historians say that their older sculptures resembled in style the pure school of Athens. No doubt the Greeks learned their first lesson from the ancient monuments of Egypt, the origin indeed of all science, for prior to the Mosaic account of the creation of the world the Egyptians had raised many magnificent monuments, proof of a high civilisation. The discovery at Sakkara which I mentioned to you of the sitting figures, evidently portraits, evince that this extraordinary people used their quaint outlines in a conventional sense, and not that they were unacquainted with the highest range of art. Nothing with them seems to have been accidental, all was done with an intention, and conveyed some mystic meaning illustrative of that religion, which, outwardly a pure idolatry, covered under its symbols the worship of one great Being, typified under forms emblematic of His attributes, and His beneficence to man. Hence the Mosaic law, the forerunner and preparer of Christianity. They must have been an astounding people, and once their monuments are seen a deep interest is roused and an earnest wish arises to be able fully to appreciate them, and to become more intimately acquainted with their history, laws and religion. Well, another tract of cultivated land, through grain falling before the sickle, through fields of sunflowers in yellow bloom, through drying stalks of tall lupins, amidst trailing cucumbers, and flowering tobacco, and Indian corn fresh springing from its germs, we came to the yellow line of the sands

of the Libyan desert, and the sandstone hills covered deep in shifting sand. Then we descended into a sepulchre entirely lined with polished basalt and covered with the strange outlines of Egyptian figures and hieroglyphs. It was an undulating waste of sand—everywhere sand—thickly strewn with the bleaching skulls and bones of the sons of Misraim, and shreds of mummy cloths, with here and there deep gaping pits whence the unhappy mummies had been torn from their resting places of centuries, and scattered pitilessly upon the desert. It was most truly a Golgotha, desolation in all senses of the word. Over all the Pyramids rose up, the great gravestones of the generations buried within their long shadows. Thus we reached the rude hut of the French excavator. This site, and all we had ridden over from the river's bank, was once Memphis, and its groves of acanthus,¹ mentioned by Herodotus, still exist close upon the desert. These sacred trees have lived on, generation succeeding generation, the only thoroughly preserved monuments of old Egypt.

Hard by the Frenchmen's hut was the Serapium, or burying ground of the bulls Apis. We descended into a pit down a steep cutting of rolling sand, and on hands and knees crawled into what from outside appeared a dark and ugly abyss, and I thought what if by a false step I am precipitated into one of the deep pits which abound about the tombs. An unfortunate Dutchman had fallen a few days before into the first tomb we visited, which I described as of black basalt. When I did get through however, I found myself in a tall arched vault cut out of the rock. Candles had been lighted along its length ere we entered, and I gazed on a long vista of dotted lights

¹ *Mimosa Nilotica* ; called acanthus by the Greeks.

struggling with intense darkness, and thus caught the full extent of the immense gallery in which we stood. Off this on either side in quick succession were vaulted chapels, in which stood enormous square sarcophagi of black basalt highly polished, but every lid was pushed back sufficiently to allow of the entrance of a man, and they were empty. These chapels had been walled up, but the partitions had been rudely torn down, and their fragments made but a rude path to tread on in that uncertain light. In these gigantic sarcophagi were buried the sacred bulls of Apis, and it is supposed that the Persian Cambyses, in his war against the Gods of Egypt, must have torn open these tombs and ejected the embalmed animals. Another vault seems to have crossed the one we were in at right angles, but it has not been explored, as evidently, being blocked up with the remains of the chapel walls, it had undergone the same fate, so labour and expense would be expended in vain. The twenty-five sitting figures, or such as remained, had been buried again in the sand and we could not consequently get a view of them, and only saw a Sphynx or two peeping out, portions of an avenue of one hundred and forty!! I did not ascend the Pyramids of Sakkara, being satisfied with having clambered up the monster of Ghizeh. During all this time the weather had been still and bright, and we saw the Pyramids of Ghizeh and Abuseir in sharp profile. As we returned I observed that the wind had gone to the south and a lurid haze was gathering on the horizon, my eye, practised in the hot plains of Mesopotamia, told me what was coming. The wind blew in occasional light breaths, warm and soft, and my companions began to complain of the increasing heat. Then the Pyramids of Abuseir presented a confused

shape, and I watched closely the gathering of the storm that was brewing. We were luckily clear of the sands and were approaching the village amidst the cultivated grounds; then I saw the brown wreaths of sand first in bending long lines here and there, and said, "prepare for what is coming, the desert wind is fast approaching and you will soon be able to fully appreciate the 'Khamseen,' not as in cities but as in the wastes." The gale rose in freshening violence, sweeping past in fiery blasts, the ladies rolled their shawls round their heads, and we pushed on our donkeys, but the sand-storm burst upon us and we were soon enveloped in its moving masses. It had neither the strength nor the denseness of what I had thrice been in at Mosul; it was however more than disagreeable even to me, and to the rest was intolerable. We gained our boat, the ladies took refuge in the cabin, we men spread the awning and we cast off, but the Arabs would not set sail saying the wind was too strong and we might be upset. I knew it was humbug. But as Mrs Melvill did not think a Nile bath would be agreeable, even by way of change from the Khamseen, I said little, and we drifted down the stream before the gale under bare poles, the wind scorching and the sand smothering us, until within three miles of Old Cairo; when the crew, I have no doubt purposely, allowed the boat to draw from the weather shore along which we had been running, to the lee side, and in one of the reaches we went bodily against the bank and settled down on to the sand. We embarked at half-past ten and it was then one P.M.; our mouths, eyes, hair and clothes were filled with sand; to pass a day in this fashion was quite sufficient, but a night also, on the open deck of a boat, was rather too much.

So Cassidy, Ogilvie and I announced our intention of walking on to Old Cairo, and then getting on donkeys and riding to Cairo to send out a carriage for the ladies, but Colonel Melvill and the others said it was quite enough to kill us, and begged us to wait till three o'clock, when perhaps the wind would change. I gave him the comforting assurance that the Khamseen generally lasted three days. However they evidently looked upon it as desertion on our part, and the janisary was despatched to a village close by to get a donkey on which to ride to Cairo, and bring out an omnibus and four to where we lay as soon as possible. There we remained till about four, when we forced the crew to warp the boat along shore, to get near the spot where the janisary, who had returned, had succeeded in getting the omnibus, over roads where none but an Arab coachman would have ventured to drive anything with wheels. The wind was strong, and the sand so thick as often to hide the opposite bank. The river had lashed itself into angry waves, from whose curling tops the white spray flew in showers of foam, and the wind forcing us upon the bank made it no easy matter to push out into the stream. By dint of tow lines and poles, and pulling and pushing and hauling, we finally were extricated but made very slow progress, and after a mile of hard work we again grounded. Having had enough of boating we all landed, and went on foot across country a mile and a half, and then to our intense satisfaction about six found ourselves rattling along with four horses. Oh! the luxury of a cold bath on reaching the hotel (the water in which I washed my head was in a moment converted into liquid yellow mud), and then after a good dinner of getting into a comfortable bed ; I thought

of the hard deck and hot wind and flying sand, and sunk into a delicious sleep.

Next day passed in paying visits with Mr Briggs and in conversing with him, and I paid a long call on Edhem Pasha, the Minister of Commerce. Next morning I left for Alexandria with the Melvills and the Moores. The two colonels are men of a certain age, but Colonel Melvill is light and active with a most pleasing expression, the other is more infirm but a nice old man. Our passage down was much the same as that up, only a squall of wind came from the north after the Khamseen and brought rain with it. We only got to Atfeh at dark, with rain still falling, and the clamber up the stiff earthen banks with the surface slippery with wet mud, was difficult; however I got up, and the ladies too, though in their attempts they tumbled flat into the mud. I saw one go down and then, afraid of trusting to her feet, scrambling up on all fours. I thought it was Mrs Melvill's sister, Miss Robertson, and tried to pull her up, which was no easy task for she was heavy, and when I did get her on her legs again, I found it was one of the Ayahs!

I have just got a letter from Stevens of Tabreez mentioning some curious discoveries made at Mosul by Rawlinson; he has found on the marble tablets the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters of Isaiah!! almost *verbatim*, with a list of the Assyrian kings from the time of David to Nebuchadnezzar, also traces of diplomatic correspondence.

I am just going off to the palace of Ras et-Tin to accompany Mr Briggs and Mr Saunders on a visit to the Governor. When I last wrote to you the Khamseen began to blow, and the second day I had no inclination

to do anything, how I got through the post I don't know; but the third, fourth and fifth days I did not mind—it is not anything like so hot as the “Sām” of Mosul, but there is a steaminess in the Alexandrian wind which makes it very oppressive and enervating. Many people were quite ill with it. The only gaiety we have had here was the usual weekly reception at the Sardinian Consul's, and a great dinner at the Saunders to the Melvills and Moores; our Indian friends were surprised to hear such good amateur singing and playing.

The cotton affair turned out magnificently, the vessel reached Liverpool on the 6th, and the whole cargo was sold at 10d., the highest price obtained this season for Egyptian. My calculation was based on 8d., so that the profit is immense upon 279,000 lbs. Had Mr Briggs consented to another affair which I proposed they would have made a sweeping profit, for the quantity was double the present cargo. Ah! it vexes my soul to think what an opportunity has been lost just for want of a little pluck. But even Mr Briggs is too slow and cautious for modern trade, when one runs a neck and neck race with the Greeks. If I had my way I would make such strokes! All Alexandria was staggered with the boldness of the first, and thought Briggs and Co. had run wild. Faint heart never won fair lady they say, and most certainly it never makes money.

ALEXANDRIA, 21st July 1853.

MY DEAR MARY,

I am getting round fast and yesterday was able to take my first ride, so I hope to be soon well. My services

as an escort have been asked for by both Mrs Saunders and Mrs Green, as neither can get their husbands to go out; to me it is a great thing, for I should quit Alexandria the moment I was able if I had no ride in the afternoon. A horse here is a necessity of life.

I met Colonel Outram, a most agreeable man, and I talked at great length with him on the politics of the day, the condition and resources of Turkey, etc. He had seen Layard, and I asked him how it was that Layard pressed the Ministry so hard on the Oriental question. He says he is disappointed. He had hoped for an Under-Secretaryship in the Board of Control, but the Ministry being composed of so many parties, Lord John Russell had very few appointments at his disposal, and was unable to name him. Layard, too, made a mistake in quitting Constantinople in such a hurry. When the Jerusalem dispute was settled he thought the whole matter was terminated and rushed home, never dreaming of Russia's next move, for during such a crisis he should have been at Constantinople.

Most interesting intelligence has this moment reached us from China. Nankin has been taken by the rebels, who are now marching upon Shanghai, and are, they say, Christians of a puritanical Protestant profession; strange, too, that the doctrines have filtered indirectly to them from Protestant missionaries, for they have never seen Europeans before. Their leader is termed the "Prince of Peace" and his code is the Ten Commandments. Four years ago they only numbered two or three hundred and have gone through intense suffering and hardship; these they say God sent as a punishment for their sins, and now that they are conquerors, enrolling their thousands and on the eve of converting China into a great Protestant



EITCHINE, A DESCENDANT OF MERJAN

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empire, they say it is by the will of God. They are very temperate, have recognised in the Europeans brethren of the same religion and, unlike other Chinese, are civil and quiet; their camp was traversed for seven miles by the English interpreter without menace or insult. The immediate consequence of this great rebellion will be hurtful to trade, but ultimately it will work wonders, and throw open those great countries to the industry and civilisation of the West. Believers in the millennium will be now convinced that, as many began to believe, it is close at hand. Infidel and immoral China suddenly converted to Christianity by a handful of unknown and barbarous neophytes; Islam rocking to its foundations and about to crumble into dust, harassed at once by earthquakes, cholera, plague and locusts, destroying cities, life and food; and finally the great northern empire about to precipitate upon Mohammedanism her millions of soldiery. In Persia the very rivers, which supplied great towns, have disappeared, and 25,000 souls perished from the earthquake in two towns, whilst sickness devastates the land.

War I conceive to be almost inevitable, and the Minister of Commerce, Khair ed-Deen Pasha, told me yesterday that another manifesto by Nesselrode had appeared in the *Odessa Gazette*; upbraiding the Turks for listening to the counsels of England and France; threatening them with dire consequences if they did not throw them off and turn cordially to the Emperor, and finally saying: "If England and France suppose they will impose upon the Emperor by a demonstration of their fleets they are mistaken, for should the combined squadron enter into the mouth of the Dardanelles we

shall accept it as a declaration of war and at once act."

The heat here is abominable, a perfect vapour bath; in my bedroom at six in the morning the thermometer marks 81°.

ALEXANDRIA, 18th August 1853.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have had a letter from John who is going to London to solicit a first lieutenantship on active service, of which I am very glad. The more so that although our advices from Vienna and London give the acceptance by Russia of the ultimatum of the great Powers, I have such an intensely bad opinion of Russia that I put no faith in what she may do, and believe she will humbug us as she generally has succeeded in doing, and that, though perhaps a little delayed, we shall not be long without a great war. Passions are rising in the East and the West; Russia won't like to lose at once her influence and to bow her pride. Turkey is boiling under the accumulation of insult and wrong, Austria is playing a questionable game with Servia, and England and France are losing their patience. If we are to have a war John had best earn his promotion when cannon shot are flying and cold steel flashing.

I leave the day after to-morrow for a ten days' cruise on the Nile with Mr and Mrs Saunders, Mr and Mrs Peel and Fred. Smart. I am glad, for on the 15th I was up all night at a ball given by M. Pastré, the leading French merchant, in honour of the Emperor Napoleon's

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fête-day, and have had a constant headache since. I hope the fine air on the Nile will do me good after breathing the abominable steam of this noxious climate.

ALEXANDRIA, 19th September 1853.

MY DEAR MARY,

The mails which were only to have gone to-morrow close this evening and I have little time, suffice that I am very well. To my surprise my old friend H. Danby Seymour came in to see me on his way to the Presidencies, to gather information on the Indian question for next Parliament. He returns in March. Layard was in Italy with his friends Lord and Lady Somers. Rawlinson, he says, has applied for Teheran; and Baghdad, the post I was to have had, had I gone to Diarbekir, may now soon be vacant. Seymour was quite amazed when he heard I had refused Diarbekir and thinks I have thrown away a golden opportunity. Layard's friends had also asked for Teheran for him, but Seymour thinks it possible he might not wish to go to Persia, even as Minister.

The weather is somewhat drier than it has been, but to-day I feel as though the unhealthy vapour-bath-atmosphere were commencing again.

ALEXANDRIA, 5th October 1853.

MY DEAR MARY,

Mr Macdonald Stephenson, chief engineer of the Bombay railway, has introduced me to Miss Chesney,

daughter of the colonel, who had come out with a Mr and Mrs Tobin to ascend the Nile, traverse the desert to Damascus and Aleppo, and go thence to Mosul, and wants advice and information. Apropos, in a long letter, Guarracino tells me that the mixed Commission has condemned Rassam to pay the sum claimed by the heirs of Mohammed Pasha. Rawlinson writes him that he expects to leave Baghdad for good this autumn.

The Nile is at an unprecedented height, it has broken its dykes, inundated the villages, swept away the Indian corn crop and probably the cotton plants. I have come in from Koom el-Dik, as Brock has been ill for some time and is going to Trieste for a month. Mr Bell, who had the upper flat of the same house at Koom el-Dik, is very ill also of fever. I assure you it is far worse than Samsoon. We had Brock, the cook, the servant, the groom, Mr Bell and his servant—all ill. The sickness here is immense in proportion to the residents, and the natives suffer equally with the Europeans. I have had both my servants ill since my return from the Nile, and I am convinced that had I not gone up to Cairo I should have been down again. If I get another attack of sickness I have made up my mind to return to Samsoon at the end of my engagement.

News this instant reaches from Constantinople 27th ult., that the Sultan, with the unanimous vote of one hundred and twenty-four voices, declares war, and refuses any further advice from the ambassadors. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe very wisely did not join the rest in asking H.H. to reconsider the decision, for the Turks told them they had waited patiently for five months, and diplomacy had left them in a worse position than it found them.

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A great national loan is being raised to assist the Government in repelling Russia with the sword; the Ulemah contribute £100,000. This is what we have gained by the hesitating policy of the Government under Lord Aberdeen. Now those who condemned Lord Palmerston may judge which policy brings us safest out of danger—the timid or the bold. It is better to be hated and feared, than to be despised and slighted abroad.

ALEXANDRIA, 20th October 1853.

MY DEAR MARY,

Turkey is displaying an energy and strength which were unexpected in Europe, but which does not surprise me; and I was quite delighted to hear of the Sultan's declaration of war. If war does come, I only hope that, combined with revolution, it will shake Russia and Austria to their centres. As for the latter imbecile power, good to no friend and contemptible as a foe, it will not take much to blot her false name out of Europe. New levies are being made here and it is believed that Abbas Pasha is about to send more troops and grain to the Sultan. Five thousand additional Regulars have lately been sent from Syria, and although the force left is inadequate to the police of the country, the Mohammedan populations are perfectly quiet. Did I know anything of soldiering I would volunteer service at once with the Turks, to fight against two nations I hate with an intensity only to be understood by those who have been long in the East, and have had opportunities of judging of their perfidy and cowardice.

I am very sorry to hear of poor Guarracino's serious illness. If anything were to happen to him that is a post I should like very much. Samsoon is likely to become an important place. In a war we may have a collision between Sir Edmund Lyons and the Russian admiral, and on the establishment of peace the navigation of the Black Sea will be placed on an equal footing for all flags. At the same time the moment the Turks are able to do so they intend to open the communications with the great corn districts of Anatolia—steppes like the grain districts of Russia. Even a railway had been projected, and after a war the Turks will be more ready to permit European companies to ameliorate the country by the employment of their capital, than they have been hitherto. In such a case there is no reason why Samsoon should not grow into a second Odessa. There is little doubt that these projected improvements in Turkey were what decided Russia to make war, as she felt that if the Turks were allowed to perfect them in peace her own trade would suffer. The Turks, on the other hand, are sensible that unless they cherish and develop the great resources which nature has given their country they cannot stand long, and this will overcome their jealousy of European establishments.

ALEXANDRIA, 20th January 1854.

MY DEAR MARY,

Many thanks for your long letter by "Ripon." Here we are on the eve of considerable gaiety. The Commerce of Alexandria gives a ball to the Consular

corps, in reality to Sabatier, for his energetic conduct in obtaining the free export of grain in merchants' hands. The leading subscriptions were twenty sovereigns each. It is to be a fête of which Alexandria "has never seen the like nor ever will again." Invitations are issued for a thousand. This is to be on the 23rd; on the 25th Mrs Saunders gives a ball to one hundred and sixty guests; on the 27th are the races. One and a half mile heats for Arabs and one mile heats for all horses. I ride of course—but in how many I don't know. In the first race certainly, on a grey of Mr Saunders called "Fantasia," and I am not sure whether I shall enter my own horse "Warrior" for the mile or not. On the Monday following is the race ball.

ALEXANDRIA, 4th February 1854.

MY DEAR MARY,

I was very glad to hear of Guarracino's recovery, I had rather he was well than that I had his place. I have written to Layard by this post and told him that were Cairo to become vacant when he was in power, I should ask him to assist me in getting it. I should not be surprised if Mr Walne were to be superseded some fine day. He is too much under the Pasha's influence, and he is very independent of the Foreign Office or superior control. I should like Cairo merely because the climate is dry and I cannot live in a damp one.

To the diplomatic ball I did not go; it was a wet night, and although not more than fifty yards along the pavement from my door, I went to bed instead. It cost £400, but

people were disappointed. Mrs Saunder's ball has been pronounced the best party of the season, and people enjoyed themselves greatly, and then they were proud of being there, for although the English are hated for their exclusiveness, an invitation to their houses is for the same reason prized.

"Fantasia," Mr Saunder's horse, turned out very badly, and in the first one and a half mile heat I had difficulty in saving distance, and in the second I pulled up. In the race of three English mares in the first heat "Agius," that belonged to an officer of the Buffs, was distanced, but nevertheless ran away from the course and never stopped until she reached home with her unhappy jockey, an Italian, so done with terror and fatigue that they had to give him restoratives. I was second, being beaten by Lee Green's thorough-bred filly after a sharp struggle. My mare had taken a great deal out of herself before starting. When I mounted she was dripping wet from excitement, and the moment I got upon her she plunged and reared so much that some of the ladies turned away their heads, and the foreigners approved of my riding. In the second heat I tried to distance my opponent but failed by a length. I was wrong to try for it, as the exertion cost me the third heat which I lost by three lengths in spite of all my endeavours to carry the mare along. The race stand was one long line of ladies, there were many carriages and people of all descriptions, the weather was very beautiful and the *coup d'œil* very pretty. A Frenchman who had just come down from Cairo, said that to have seen the contest between the two English mares was quite worth the journey.

ALEXANDRIA, 20th September 1854.

MY DEAR MARY,

You will have heard all about my changing ideas for the future. To my application for Cairo, were it to become vacant, I have received an answer from Lord Clarendon's secretary that there was no reason to suppose that it was likely to be soon vacant. This instead of a disappointment is rather a relief to me, as what I chiefly desired was not to be forgotten at the Foreign Office, and my intentions were balancing between a partnership in Briggs & Co and a return to Samsoon. The latter would be the most paying of the two, for in two or three years I should in all probability be sole partner, and hold the Consulate besides, and what I long ago foresaw, and what you all ridiculed, is now taking place, Samsoon will become the seat of a very important trade. On the other hand the society, which I have learned to like, draws me to a continuance here. In six years at Samsoon I should probably be comparatively rich, but the best years of life would have passed away in solitude. In Alexandria in the same period I might be second or third partner, and have got through pretty nearly whatever I might have made, for without money nothing is to be done here, and it goes fast; but those six years would have rolled away pleasantly. It is disagreeable to have to decide upon one's future career, for what I now do must be positive.

We have been very gay here, great illuminations and public rejoicings on the return of the Viceroy from Constantinople, all the Princes have come down from Cairo

to greet him, together with all the great dignitaries. I was present at a lunch to-day on board the P. and O. Co.'s new steamer *Nubia*, given by Mr Holton to the Viceroy's brother Halim Pasha, a very nice gentlemanly young man. He asked me if I was disposed to ride another race against his horses, I said I was ready to do so but we had nothing to pit against him just now. Of Mr Bruce, our Consul-General, I see a good deal; you know he is the brother of one of our rising men, Lord Elgin. He is most agreeable, and I am glad that, as the Viceroy has constituted Alexandria his chief residence, we shall often have him here. Henry Lockwood is his secretary, a very good fellow but terribly die-away; he goes by the name of "Lydia Languish," and one man observed of him that he was the most lady-like man he had ever met, which is a true description.

I have lately been passing the nights at "Ramleh" (The Sands), a place three miles off in the direction of Aboukir, where the desert extends between the canal and the sea. I rode out after the business of the day, slept there, rose with the dawn, bathed ere the sun rose, behind a reef, to screen me from the sharks which are always along the coast, mounted my horse at six, reached town at seven, had breakfast, and in half an hour got on a fresh horse and rode to the canal to make purchases of produce for the house, look after the store, etc., back again for my Turkish lesson from nine till ten, and then into the counting-house.

If you can manage it do bring me from Naples some roots of lily of the valley which I have promised to try and get for Mrs A. Green. My own window garden I have given up in despair. In the bad air of this town and

with its brackish water nothing will thrive ; all my flowery pets die off in spite of every care.

[In November Mr Ross decided to leave Egypt and again join Mr Guarracino ; and after spending Christmas with his family at Malta he left for Samsoon, passing some days at Constantinople on his way to visit a friend who was lying ill in the hospital at Scutari. At the end of the year he was named acting Consul at Samsoon.]

HOTEL D'ANGLETERRE, PERA,

11th January 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

I reached this the day before yesterday, our passage was a tolerable one for winter. Leaving Malta the wind was due east, right against us, with a cross sea running from the north. At seven I was ill and went to my berth, and thought how much better I should have been with you all at home. The noise was distracting, the screw went "roup, roup," the tiller chain clanked in sharp jerks, timbers groaned, bulkheads creaked, and the vessel rolled down almost to her gunwale. My scuttle was constantly buried, and as the ship rose I dimly saw the long seas escaping from beneath her counter. At noon of the 5th we were running along the south coast of the Morea, its sharp, bold mountains silvered with snow. It quite gladdened my heart to see them after the flat features of Egypt. After this point our voyage was always interesting. With the Greek islands scattered around us we were always in sight of land, and many of them were capped with snow. We only got to the Dardanelles at four in

the afternoon of the 7th, and as we were too late to pass the Castles before dark had to anchor for the night. It was a clear sky and brilliant atmosphere. We lay a little to the north of Besika Bay, and from our deck I could easily make out the exact ground I had shot over eighteen years ago, when just at the same season of the year I went to the East for the first time as a lad of seventeen in 1837. Before us Lemnos raised his noble peaks gleaming white, on our right Mount Ida towered over the plains of Troy in grand sheets of snow; but the cold was bitter—even at noon, and even the English passengers complained. Next morning at six we entered the Dardanelles and were all day running through, emerging only at sunset. During the night we had to go at slowest speed, as one cannot enter the Golden Horn in its present crowded state except by day, so we only got there at eight in the morning of the 9th. The atmosphere was raw and heavy, and the sun unable to pierce the misty vapours which hung over everything; still it was beautiful—always must be—however often seen. We were a long time taking up the berth allotted to us by the harbour-master, and it was late before I could get my baggage. After I had established myself at Misiries I went up to the Consul-General, to get a Cawass to clear the nine packages Guarracino had put under my care, and found that nothing under an order from the Porte itself could do it, so had to trudge back from the top of Pera to Galata in mud and heavy rain. Next morning early I went to Scutari to find Fanshawe.¹

¹ Lieutenant Fanshawe Gostling, one of the few who survived the terrible affair of Cathcart Hill in the Crimea. He went into action a lieutenant and came out, by death vacancies, colonel of his regiment.

First I went to the General Hospital and wandered through the long wards, betwixt a double line of sick and wounded, without finding anyone who could give me the least information either about Fanshawe, Dr Laing or Captain Gordon.¹ I then went to the Scutari Barracks, again I wandered through interminable sick wards, and again no one knew anything or anybody. Finally in the Square I met a young officer who fortunately turned out to be Gordon, and he sent his orderly with me to show me Fanshawe's quarters. The Scutari Barracks and Hospital are splendid edifices. The sick are now well cared for and most seemed cheerful. Some however had death in their eyes and one poor fellow died just after I passed. On my return I found them tying him up in his blanket with a paper ticket pinned on, stating who he was. I met several bodies being carried out on stretchers borne by Turkish "hamals," or porters, and escorted by an orderly to the fosses which were being dug between the General Hospital and the Marmora; coffins and funeral parties are quite dispensed with.

The cold has set in in the Crimea, snow covers the ground and frost has hardened the roads. But although there was plenty of warm clothing and hundreds of wooden huts at Balaklava, there were neither animals nor spare men to carry them up to camp. Sevastopol seems as far from capture as ever, but the thirteen inch mortars were being got into position. People complain loudly against Lord Raglan, who is never seen, but shuts himself up reading the newspapers and writing dispatches; never goes round the camp to show himself to the soldiers

¹ Afterwards Gordon Pasha.

and to examine the defences. This is, they say, how Inkermann occurred. Nothing was done which ought to have been done, because Lord Raglan would not look to things himself, would not listen to better officers than himself, and trusts to young officers, mere dandy aide-de-camps, unequal to the necessities of war. Our commissariat too is universally condemned, mismanagement people say is not the word, public money is iniquitously squandered, and our troops left in want of all they ought to have had. They say here that we administer worse than the Turks, our arrangements are not a whit better than theirs, we display no more foresight, no more care, while we are squandering money of which they have none. Our faults arise from stupidity, or worse, theirs from bankruptcy.

Omer Pasha has landed with a good force at Eupatoria and marched to Perekop, to bar the passage to reinforcements for Sevastopol. Beatson is to make a fresh attempt to organise the Bashi Bozook, to be paid and officered by us; the men to receive two months' pay in advance. Our great difficulty will be the officers and men not understanding one another. Were I not otherwise engaged I should have liked such service; being a good horseman I could soon have learned the simple manœuvres of irregular cavalry, and speaking Turkish and understanding the character of the men, I might have made a good partisan officer. It seems that the want of a body of irregular cavalry, hardy and good horsemen, is much felt—something to cope with the Cossacks, who dog all our movements and keep the Russian commanders acquainted with every step we make, while they march their troops backwards and forwards, and we

know neither where they are going nor whence they come.

After leaving Fanshawe I called at the Embassy, but Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had gone to Scutari. Here people are worked to death but are making rapid fortunes. The streets are full of French soldiers and a sprinkling of English. The pavement is frightfully bad, and the mud and water flow in black ooze over it; it is always a dirty hole, but now is worse than ever. To-day there is a grey sky and a sleety rain soaking down, chilly and dismal.

PERA, 17th January 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

Judge of my amazement when, the day before yesterday late in the afternoon, in the midst of driving snow I was pushing my way out of Istamboul back to Pera, I heard my name called, and saw Colonel Gostling, cured of the rheumatism caused by camping on the bare ground. Lucky that by a strange chance he did meet me, for evening was closing in, cold increasing miserable and wretched, and he was in full career towards the midst of Constantinople, imagining all the while that he was returning to his hotel, instead of which he was increasing the distance every minute. Yesterday I went over the mosques, tombs and bazaars with him, snow falling all the day so thickly that one could only see a short way. I also went to see Lady Napier, and found her and Lord Napier (of Ettrick) at home, she was a little changed of course, but looked so nice and English, and

received me with the elegant courtesy habitual to her. I met Lord Napier on Sunday coming out of church, and afterwards I saw the Ambassador by appointment. He talked a good deal about the political state of Turkey and seemed to despair of essential reform. He said he had been chiefly instrumental in drawing up a severe enactment against corruption, to try which a special court of well-paid judges was to be established, and which was now passing through the Porte. He also told me Mr Guarracino had expressed a hope that the Consulate of Samsoon might be placed under my charge, to which he had no objection whatever, but could not supersede the present man without sufficient reason; but should he vacate the charge I should have it. On Sunday I dined with a Turkish Greek, a friend of Guarracino's of the name of Macarios. Henry Suter, Horace Guarracino and another Greek of the name of Yuvanoff with his wife, rather a pretty person, a Rayah Greek named Stavraky and Mad. Macarios formed the party. Amongst them all, none but Yuvanoff spoke an European language, and so Turkish was the medium for conversation. The house was very handsomely furnished—but there was no fire—only a wretched brazier—and I was mortally cold. At dinner I thought I should have been turned to an icicle. I was perishing, the napkins felt frosty, the Bordeaux might have been good, but being only a few degrees above 32, it was impossible to taste it. I went home at double quick pace, the snow was hard and crisp with black frost and my blood was nearly stagnant; I was quite glad to bury myself beneath a pile of bed-clothes. Next night I dined with Adam Glascott, the naval officer now in charge of the Commission for the Persian

and Turkish frontier question, afterwards I went to the Austrian Embassy reception; the diplomatic world was all there, the Redcliffes, Benedettis, Wildenbrucks, etc. Yesterday I dined at the Embassy and sat next Miss Canning. Alison came up and renewed acquaintance, I had called on him without finding him. He is a useful fellow to be well with—of transcendent talent—a good friend and a dangerous enemy. I promised to get him some information he wanted on the resources of the countries behind Samsoon. To-day I dine with Mad. Benedetti,¹ wife of the French *Chargé d'affaires*, and adopted daughter of d'Anastasy of Alexandria (1). To-morrow perhaps I may be off to Samsoon by an Austrian screw steamer of which I hear a very bad account, "she has not sufficient power for the Black Sea and I might be many days *en route* which would be unpleasant; so if the "Astrologer" comes in from the Black Sea to-morrow and returns on the 21st or so, I shall wait for her in preference, as she makes the journey in two days.

News from the Crimea is very sad, mismanagement and bad generalship have sacrificed a noble army. Our men are dying of exposure and famine at a frightful rate; and all might have been averted by the simplest foresight and

¹ Mad. Benedetti's story is a romantic one. She, with many other small children, was brought from Schio, on the occasion of the massacre during the rising in Greece, by the Turkish soldiers and exposed for sale in the Square at Alexandria. M. d'Anastasy, a rich Greek merchant who was Swedish Consul-General in Egypt, bought two of the little girls for a few dollars as companions to his two daughters, who died a few years afterwards, when he adopted the little Greek girls. One married a French engineer in the service of Mohammed Ali Pasha, the other, by far the handsomest, M. Benedetti, who began life as a "Jeune de langue" in the French Consulate at Alexandria.

care. In a sortie on the eve of the 13th the Russians did us a good deal of harm. In fact our men are desperate, they enter the trenches expressing their hope that a Russian bullet will terminate their miseries. They roll themselves up in their blankets and, benumbed by cold, are quite indifferent whether the enemy comes or not. Our horses might have been all fed and stabled at Balaklava, might have made two trips a day to camp with huts, provisions and clothing; but no, they are kept in camp without cover, left without food and die, and their work has to be done by the men who perish in their turn under the excess of work demanded of them. Of one division of 4500 men who went to the Crimea 800 alone remain. Thus our army melts away.

From Alison and another member of the Embassy I was glad to hear that they consider Layard's position a good one; that he is playing a high and difficult game, but with a fair chance of winning it. To have obtained the name he has got, without making more enemies, is alone a great point. All this I was delighted to learn.

SAMSOON, 30th January, 1855.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Your very kind letter reached me yesterday, and I feel grateful and proud of the more than friendly sentiments it expresses towards me. My present prospects are, I am glad to say, good. The war no doubt has stimulated the trade of this place; the necessities of our army and the closing of the Danube and of Odessa has

created a great demand for grain. This will cease to a certain extent when the extraordinary causes which have produced it will be terminated by peace. But my belief is that the trade created and fostered by the war will not cease with it. The people of the interior have learned to send their produce hither for sale, and have gained so largely that they have been tempted to extend tillage to the utmost. The forests behind us are being cleared, and as men are scarce, women are cultivating the land. All this produce must come hither for sale, as the interior has no consumption for it. I have been quite surprised to learn the riches of some of the landed proprietors in Asia Minor. One Bey offered in one sale £30,000 worth of wheat, all stored and ready for delivery. This was probably the proceeds of two or three years' harvest, but still I am surprised that such riches should exist amongst what may be called the "landed gentry" of Anatolia—the real aristocracy in fact—out of which something may perhaps some day be made, and which I believed had been long ago stripped of its wealth and power. But it seems that in the days of misrule and oppression, the land-holding Beys and Aghas round about Sivas, Bozook, Tchoroom and the other great corn districts, held together, and presented too strong a phalanx for hungry Valy's to touch with too rude a hand, and now of course they have nothing to fear. Anatolia possesses numerous resources which our commissariat would have done wisely to have availed itself of much more largely than it has done. Samsoun is the natural and only practicable port at which the produce of Asia Minor can arrive, and our people look almost entirely to Sinope. Sinope is certainly the only good port on the south side of the Black Sea betwixt

Constantinople and Batoum, but the roads leading to it are so frightfully bad that caravans will rarely go over them. Now Samsoon, although only an open roadstead, is perfectly safe, as the land behind it is so high that the wind never blows home, and it is protected by the whole lay of the coast from Sinope, and by its own point and ruined mole, from the only dangerous gales which occur—those of the N.W., and vessels ride out the worst weather throughout the winter with perfect safety. The holding ground is so good that the anchors never come home. This very season an English brig the “Thessalia” anchored in fine weather too close to the shore, indeed within the first line of breakers, of which there are three rolling in upon our shallow beach. A north-wester came on, the seas broke over the vessel and to the master’s surprise, she rode easily through it with a slack cable; not the slightest strain upon it, and the anchor did not give an inch. The seas come in but the wind is beaten back by the high land behind us, and from this place almost any quantity of grain, oxen and sheep, firewood and charcoal may be procured. Last year 220,000 quarters of grain, consisting of wheat, barley and Indian corn was exported, produced from the coast between Sivas and Kaisariah. The great grass prairies between Sivas and Kaisariah produce quantities of cattle and sheep, as do also the rich pastures of Bafra and Tcharshambah to the west and east of Samsoon. Mules are bred by thousands in the mountain districts, and can be purchased here in numbers from the “katirgees” (muleteers) who arrive daily with their caravans. All around Samsoon there are herds of small hardy horses running loose till the age of five years, over the hills and among the woods. Our forests of oak, elm and every

European tree, grow down, in broad sheets of green, to the wash of the sea. Various grains are grown all round us, but in more limited quantities; such as haricot beans, of which we are buying all we can for the French army, lentils, linseed, hempseed, rye, oats and rice in abundance. For the French we are now under contract for oxen, firewood and charcoal, and for the English we are buying barley. But our great difficulty is bringing it down in winter, the roads are terribly cut up by rain and snow, the dense traffic having worked the clay roads into a mire of mud. For this country is now supplying the Batoum army with grain and straw, and there is a constant passage of animals from the interior. Had the road been improved by covering it with stone from the hills amongst which it winds, produce might have come down throughout the winter with ease. But the Turks, who had finally understood the necessity of opening the communications with the interior, had only just sent an engineer to Samsoon to construct a good road as far as Amassia, when the war broke out, and having no spare money for roads the idea was abandoned. But if it is ever carried out this place may rival Odessa. Sinope, too, would become a very important port were a road constructed to Castamboul, which would pass through a rich corn country. And if, as I suppose, the Black Sea be opened to our men of war, Sinope must become their port of rendezvous.

When at Constantinople I saw Lord Stratford de Redcliffe who did me the honour of asking me to dinner and was very pleasant. He told me that Guarracino was about to be made Consul of Samsoon and Sinope, and that the matter was nearly settled. Of course I knew the thing was in question, and I think that

considering the distance between the two places and the extreme unhealthiness of Samsoon, which by fever frequently for the time disables nearly every resident, and from the effects of which Guarracino is now suffering, it would be advisable that the Government should appoint a Vice-Consul regularly accredited as such to the authorities. If the war continues, supplies must be drawn from this coast of grain and of animals, whether for food or for transport, and Samsoon and Sinope must both perform their part. We are at this moment trying to open a new trade for grain to be brought to, and shipped from Gherzé, a small place noted on the maps, on the eastern side of the Bay of Sinope.

I can perfectly understand the mismanagement of affairs in the Crimea. I heard quite enough at Constantinople, and have now an opportunity of judging for myself how badly we conduct our operations, especially the commissariat. Our army has been sacrificed to the obstinacy and incapacity of the officers employed, they display a want of foresight and administration almost beyond belief; and what is worse, being incapable, and ignorant of the country and the climate in which they find themselves, they persist in rejecting advice from those who were able and willing to give it. Had things been done in time, our soldiers might have been housed, fed, and warmed; our cavalry and baggage-horses saved; and the saving of the animals would have saved the men. Why were the animals not stabled at Balaklava where their rations could have been brought by ships, and whence they might have made one or two trips a day with food, clothing and huts to camp, and returned at night to stables which might have been excavated in the banks

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and very slightly made, as so many beasts together would have generated sufficient warmth. But they had not even enough food for them. Had they only applied to us in time, ere winter had broken up the roads, we could have supplied as much as might have been requisite, and thirty hours' sail would have landed all in the Crimea. But no, they wait until winter has set in and then of course difficulties commence.

SAMSOON, 31st January 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

My safe arrival here you will have heard already. We are at a slack season just now; the roads being terribly cut up with snow and rain the caravans traverse them with difficulty, so the cost of transport is excessive. But later on when the mud dries up I hope we shall resume affairs on a large scale again. The weather for the first few days after my arrival continued fine and frosty, and I took advantage of it to enjoy a couple of days' woodcock shooting. I bagged the first day six, and the second day nine, and missed a glorious old pheasant who came up suddenly towards me straight over my head, a difficult shot. But it was beautiful to see the noble bird, resplendent in purple and gold, as the sun's rays broke in a thousand lights on his glossy neck and breast. My heart quite danced with joy at the sight of his long tail streaming behind him in the clear atmosphere. I saw a hare too, stealing quietly away through the bush, she had got too far to leave a thought of bringing my barrels to bear upon her. Old "Rap" has proved a

very treasure of a dog. It was quite wonderful how he took up his work at once amidst the dense woods and thorny thickets, driving the cocks out as if he had been all his life at it. The cover was so thick that I only got a shot at every second, third, or fourth bird, many I did not see though they flushed up noisily, beating their wings against the bush within a few yards of me; to my great surprise I found Rap quite obedient, he remained by me whilst loading. Tell Christian that I am delighted with his gift. The pointer is too delicate for such rough work, he regularly yelled as the sharp thorns struck his thin skin and stained his sides with streaks of blood; even old "Rap" was dotted with red, and my own arms and legs are scratched and bruised all over. Now the weather is soft and mizzly, and the mud! such mud! it is a work of despair to get from the house to the office. I groan inwardly as I go sliding about on the horrid black pebbles of which the causeway is formed and wonder, at completing the task, how I got over it with sound limbs. I rode home along the beach this afternoon. There was a thick Scotch mist—a particularly wet one—I watched the wild ducks floating about along the line of breakers, or wending their way low down upon the water in the grey mist which hung like a thick veil, and seemed to prevent them from rising higher. I galloped over the hard sands, and coming back across the turf jumped a ditch, and felt all my savage instincts returning upon me, now that I am again among the wild countries of the East. After Constantinople and my little den at the Hotel d'Angleterre, I did feel so comfortable in a good-sized carpeted room, with two windows on two sides. The bay, shipping and town

are mapped out below me on one side, and the wooded and snow-covered mountains on the other, an American stove is lighted morning and evening, my canary hangs from the ceiling in front of one window singing his merry little soul out, and a neglected little bird I found here in the other. George Guarracino is only now waiting to superintend the first instalment of three hundred bullocks to the French Government, for which we every day expect a steamer, and will then leave for Constantinople to try and get direct business, with every chance of success, and I shall be here to act upon anything he may arrange.

SAMSOON, 14th February 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

Nothing would I have liked more than to have been your escort to all the parties you mention, especially to the Basil Halls who are charming—I hope I have not seen the last of them. But it is better that I should be where I am, my dear sister; I have every reason to suppose that our business will take large proportions. The Liverpool steamers are to run direct from England to Trebizond, and we are their agents here. I expect the “Baalbek” to open the line about the first week in March. If the war lasts but a year or two my fortune is assured, and so is the future trade of Samsoon—a trade once developed, even by extraordinary circumstances, is not lost again—gains will be smaller but a regular business will continue. I am perfectly satisfied with my lot, though I have not even reading time; for what spare

time I have I am devoting to Turkish, and am reading regularly with a master. I wish to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the written language to be able to read and understand all Eastern documents well, of course we receive and write many Turkish letters, bonds, etc., in the course of trade. It may often happen too that the facility of writing a note in Turkish to our own people, when secrecy and despatch are necessary, may be of the utmost importance, and I think by this time next year I shall be able to do so.

The weather here for several days has been quite warm—not pleasant—a sultry south wind; but it is a drying wind, and judging from what it is here our poor fellows in the Crimea will have suffered less and been able to get on with their road; I should hope there can have been no frost in the Crimea for the last ten days. But a few mornings ago we had a terrible squall from the land which may have done damage at Balaklava. Our Bay was a sheet of white, there was no space for waves, the high land not allowing them, but the foam was driving in broad masses. Poor old “Rap” is quite done up with the Samsoon bush, but as eager as ever once out, on idle days he remains in *stiff* repose after his fatigue. He has quite lost all his surliness, is much admired and a great favourite. I have become very fond of him and he of me. As a shooting dog I desire none better, he drove out a pheasant beautifully the last time I was out, beating about in very dense cover. I saw he was on warm scent and presently heard the strong *whirr* as the bird rose in the copse followed by Rap’s bark of wild despair, but I could see nothing through the thick trees.

SAMSOON, 7th March 1855.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

From Colonel M'Murdo I have not heard in reply to the letter I addressed to him, but from La Fontaine I got a confidential letter, to my surprise as I barely know him, to say that in a few days I shall be offered the agency of the Government to proceed to Mosul to buy horses, saying, "now I know that any sum you choose to name will be allowed you for salary. Your services are deemed so necessary that a £1000 a year would be granted you freely and all your expenses. Indeed anything you please." Now if Government have so overweening an opinion of my desert it is owing to you. Colonel M'Murdo is in the Crimea and I wait to hear what he says.

Here we are doing an immense business, chiefly with the *fournisseurs* who have contracted to supply the French army all the year round. We give them cattle, sheep, barley, French beans, wood, vegetables, fruit, poultry, etc. The day before yesterday an English commissariat officer, D.A.C. General Crookshank with a Mr Wood came to see the country. Their visit was brought about by Captain Kruger, who commands the "Lion" and whom I had met at Sinope. I told him about the capabilities of Samsoon as a place of supply for the army, which conversation he repeated to Mr Filder. It seems that Samsoon has been neglected by some croquet of Sir E. Lyons that it is an unsafe port; now if Sir E. Lyons would only apply to the Consulate here for the annual gross returns of shipping and trade he would find that a mass of vessels, sailing

ships and steamers, load here all the year round an immense quantity of valuable goods, and not a single ship has ever been lost in a long series of years. The best proof is the regularity with which the Austrian Lloyds steamers call in and load here every ten days—and a more timid set of navigators I suppose never existed. It may happen once or twice during the winter that in a strong north-wester shipping operations are stopped for a few hours, but the ships themselves are in perfect safety from the excellence of the holding ground, and the set of the current from the river checks the strength of the seas. Why the devil don't they survey these places?

Mr Crookshank was evidently much pleased with his visit and said he hoped and believed that another commissariat depot would be at once organised here, so our business will be still further increased.

SAMSOON, 16th March 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have been a remiss correspondent lately but I have no time, all day long, until I finish with candles, do I scrib-scribble in our little den of an office, coming home in the gloom or in positive darkness with a lantern to guide me, and my private correspondence is stolen from my fair share of rest, as I rise early to breathe a gulp of fresh air and let the dogs have a run ere breakfast. Guarracino came here by Austrian steamer from Constantinople four days ago, and went on to Trebizond next day. He tells me that our Government would now give me even £1000 a year if I would take the agency

from Samsoon to the Persian Gulf, Mosul to Basra being my principal station. £400 it seems was the first idea so my value has been gradually rising. The difficulty was there being no precedent for so high a salary. It is sufficiently handsome—but I am doing better. Guarracino tells me that Lord Stratford has been consulted about the Sinope Consulate, and as I have not addressed myself to him but only to the Foreign Office, which formerly was very jealous of any interference on the part of the Ambassador, he will certainly oppose the appointment; especially as I have asked for liberty to trade, which he is hostile to. Without the faculty to trade they may keep their consulate, for I would not have it. We just hear of the death of the Emperor of Russia. This will probably have a great influence in the question of war and peace, as the young Emperor Alexander was already understood to be greatly against the policy of his father. Things are however now in so complicated a state, and it will require so great a sacrifice of territory and position to put them straight again, that it is doubtful whether the young Sovereign will possess abnegation enough to mark his ascent to the throne by an act which would deprive him of much power, and lower the station of his country and people.

How Layard is coming out! He is improving as an orator, and his words are true. It is my conviction that he will be in high place some day, borne along by that popular wave whose swelling I have marked for years, and which will finally overwhelm the landmarks of aristocracy. I have long been persuaded that we are hurrying on towards republicanism—virtual if not nominal; it must end so, and the leading minds of the nation must

be its rulers. People laughed when I predicted the present war; they have done so, and may do so still, at the thought of republican England. A lecture on politics, however, is not very amusing to you.

SAMSOON, 15th May 1855.

MY DEAR MARY,

I have many letters to thank you for, but my memory is overloaded with a host of affairs demanding attention, and which wring my brain with anxiety, sometimes I have suffered to a degree which I cannot express, so great were the interests at stake. Only people accustomed to business can comprehend what it is to have thirty ships threatening to run upon demurrage. Luckily all this is past—but while it lasted months have wrought the work of years. I have often been working from six in the morning till half past nine at night, getting dinner at ten, after more than twelve hours fasting; from dinner I got up to roll half dead into bed.

We have perpetually strangers dropping in; they like Samsoon best of the Black Sea stations, and consider it a paradise after the Crimea. The scenery is the great theme of admiration. Our port is always full of steamers and shipping, taking in supplies for the three armies. I have got the garden into tolerable order, not that I now do anything myself, but I have fallen upon a very intelligent Greek gardener who takes interest in it. I must say he occupies himself much more with the useful than the ornamental, nevertheless I get such bouquets as

were never seen in Malta. With me you know flowers are a passion, and when I come home tired and fatigued, my eye is gladdened as I walk through the garden.

SAMSOON, 15th June 1855.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I received with great pleasure your letter from Orton Longueville, and feel happy that the whirl in which you live has not banished me from your mind, and that you still preserve the friendship formed amidst scenes which perhaps neither of us are ever destined to see again. Your career I watch with deep interest, for I may be wrong, but I believe that the nation is not likely to be satisfied with even a radical change in the army. The power of our aristocracy must go and men must be chosen whose only recommendation will be their fitness to rule, or better to say direct, the destinies, of a nation so powerful and so free as ours.

Asia Minor is fulfilling your predictions. It has become one of the chief producers of supplies to the allied armies; especially Samsoon. Our harbour is crowded with shipping, loading animals and grain. The quantity of bullocks in this country is extraordinary, we have delivered as many as 1000 a week to the commissariat, and might give many more if required. French, English and Turkish steamers are constantly coming in for supplies. Our house is rarely empty of guests, and we are a large party ourselves, for to carry on the work Guarracino has got two of his cousins and other inferior employés. I have made large purchases of horses, mules

and camels for the land transport, and we are sending off great quantities of firewood for both armies. Indeed the work has been almost killing. The commissariat has put nearly all its business into our hands; there is a deputy-assistant commissary-general stationed here and officers are constantly running over from the Crimea. Samssoon has awoken from its long sleep, and become so stirring a place that the difficulty is to find hands sufficient to carry on the work. Boats and porters are too few for the traffic. Guarracino is up country purchasing bullocks, he has secured 6000 in less than a month. There is no doubt that from here the three armies will receive a very considerable portion of their supplies of all descriptions, animals, barley, wheat, straw and hay. Those who come over from the Crimea prefer Samssoon to Sinope, as the latter is very sleepy; and this country is much admired, and with reason.

So far we are all well, it is fortunate, for in the turmoil in which we are living, and the severe work we have to get things through, I don't know what we should do without health. Time flies so rapidly, no idle moments intervene to allow of any regrets for the loss of society, and I trust to put by enough to enable me to run home when this stir is over and to see you again, after the various disappointments I have had since we parted at Mosul.

SAMSOON, 15th July 1855.

DEAR MARY,

We continue here in a whirl of business and are now coming to the most nervous of our engagements,

and although the season be yet distant, the preparation necessary will give us a deal to do. We have to feed and house five thousand head of cattle for the commissariat during the winter, and in a country where such a thing has never been known. Hitherto the animals, divided in small groups through the villages, have been abandoned to God's mercy; in severe seasons half of them perish. So that to bring such numbers together, to build shelters for them, and collect the masses of forage they will require when the communications are cut off as soon as the bad weather commences, is a serious affair. Guarracino tore us from business the other day to carry us off to a pretty spot on a mountain. We had a Turkish guard all be-hung with arms and apparatus of all kinds, more picturesque than formidable, and I had three of my Land Transport Corps men. We were in all shades of costume betwixt East and West, so the cavalcade looked pretty as it wound in straggling line through copse wood and grain, every now and then two or three dashing away over the green turf; arms waving, cloaks flying, in the gesture of mimic warfare. We got among fir, rhododendron and azalea, dined upon kids roasted whole, planted upright in the ground on the long stake upon which they had been impaled to be roasted. It took us two and a half hours to get up to our bourne, a country residence built by one of the hereditary Pashas, tumbling to ruins like all other things in this sunny land. We placed ourselves on the grass by a spring-head under a fine beech tree, below us the mountain sank in deep dells, wild wood climbing up its rocky sides; above and behind us a forest extended without a break for thirty miles; before us long sweeps of undulating ground, yellow with corn

and broken by green covert. Mountains bounded the scene right and left, betwixt the swelling slopes shone the bright blue waters of the Euxine. It did us much good, although I could ill afford the time. But to pass a whole day in perfect idleness breathing the fresh air, after being cramped day after day, Sundays not excepted, for twelve hours at a time over an office desk in a vault close and hot as an oven, was delightful. I should like to have nothing to do for a whole week; this incessant toil is terrible, my muscles ache perpetually from it.

SAMSOON, 20th August 1855.

DEAR MARY,

We go on much the same, all of us are well, although there has been a good deal of fever, arising mainly I believe from the putrefying carcasses of hundreds of bullocks belonging to the French; they gather the poor beasts together close to the town where not an atom of food remains, they starve, sicken and die, and they won't bury them. The cholera passed through here on its way to the interior; as usual it was scarce felt, the fever atmosphere does not allow of its development. It shows itself, half a dozen die, a dozen or two are ill, and away it goes to deal death with almost every stroke in the interior. At Amassia, of all those seized, only two recovered.

Our port is very active, commissariat steamers flock in for cattle, and ships are loading great quantities of grain and firewood for Constantinople and the Crimea. Under

these circumstances I do not feel the dulness of the place, for I am stretched upon a wheel of business which keeps me working hard all day till sunset, when I have to break away from the multitude of affairs and people waiting in my office, to take a canter before dinner.

SAMSOON, 6th October 1855.

DEAR MARY,

I just send you a few lines to ask how you are, and to say that in spite of malaria and putrefying carcasses of perishing bullocks, dying in hundreds and thousands out of the droves collected for the allied armies, I am in the rudest health. Poor old Rap is dead, I was so grieved; poor old dog, he was such a good creature and such a favourite from his excellent temper. He was out with me one morning quail shooting and went through his work right well; that day he began to swell under one foreleg, it extended to the other side and his belly, and he died. I think it must have been a bite by a serpent or other venomous creature. A few days after I lost the pointer by some strange disease also, and am now dogless. Without dogs I don't know what I shall do. I am going down in a few days to see some cattle of ours, at a place where they tell me the pheasants come out of the forest, a hundred or two at a time, to drink at the pools.

We have been lighting fires lately; three weeks ago we had snow close to us on the first range of mountains; it is again wild and stormy and things betoken an early and severe winter. What a contrast to last year at

Alexandria. From this dullest of all impassive places you cannot expect a letter such as you write, out of the intangible nothing can be formed.

SAMSOON, 4th January 1856.

DEAR MARY,

New Year's Day I spent in my usual fashion whenever I can get a holiday—amongst the woodcocks and pheasants, to the amazement of the worthies of Samsoon who came up to the house to pay their solemn visit to the new Acting-Consul, whom they expected, I suppose, to find seated in state to receive visitors. It was a brilliant day, a hard frost, and I enjoyed my seven hours through the woods immensely, and got a good bag. We had a small party to dinner, and so passed the first day of 1856. I was wondering who you would have. I am intensely busy and so with every good wish, say good-bye. I am expecting to be called to the Crimea on Land Transport business, and shall be curious to see how things are going with my own eyes.

*HEADQUARTERS, LAND TRANSPORT
CORPS, CRIMEA, 14th March 1856.*

DEAR MARY,

Last Sunday I landed at Balaklava, remained there two nights, and then shifted my quarters to this place. Nothing can give you an idea of the extraordinary scene

which this camp presents. It can be only understood by the eye. It is the most interesting sight I have ever witnessed. Our troops are in splendid order—men and horses—and we are thoroughly prepared for war, now peace has come. The French, on the contrary, are in a very bad condition, ill fed, clothed, and lodged. They are dying by thousands. Nineteen thousand, it is estimated, has been their mortality during the last two months, and from people about their *intendance* I learned that, although they send away as many sick as can bear the voyage to Constantinople, they have here 24,000 in hospital. When I was at Kamiesh (Reed, or the Place of Reeds), they were embarking large numbers of men. Their horses are very poor and mangy. In fact, they are now what we were the first winter. The Sardinians are suffering a good deal also from typhus, but not so much as the French. We certainly shine; animals, men, roads, scientific appliances, shelter, everything far outvie our neighbours; as usual we only required a little adversity to spur up our energies and to take the lead.

I went up to Sevastopol through the salient angle of the Great Redan, where our men went in and out again in such a hurry. My feet trod the graves of the Russians who perished in the struggle, the ground is torn and rent with shot and shell, fragments of iron missiles are thickly strewn about, death must have filled all the space and the conflict must have been terrible. Still, though the ditch had been greatly filled up, the parapet broken down, and the embrasures less defined, my firm impression is that resolute bearing would have taken it. Whether the fault lay with the leading columns or the

mismanagement of the reserves, we failed where we ought to have succeeded. I saw the Malakoff on my right, but have not yet entered it. From the Redan, skirting the splendid piles of walls representing what were once the Russian barracks, I descended to the docks—mere mounds of ruined masonry. Thence skirting the beautifully constructed aqueduct, I rode round the head of the harbour, leaving the city on my left, and reached the valley of the Tchernaya, a sluggish little stream which, through a wilderness of reeds, flows into the noble harbour; not unlike that of Valetta, but on a larger scale, and with a more open entrance. Where there had once been a bridge over the river I rode up to its bank; on the near side stood I, opposite stood a Russian vedette; but a few days before my life would not have been worth a moment's thought. Hence I wound along over oozy soil under the fine cliffs of Inkerman, opposite the caves on the northern bank; on the road, and dotted along the southern slope, lay numbers of remains of Russian dead. After Inkerman their wounded had endeavoured to gain the river, across which lay their friends, but hundreds had fallen on the descent. Some amidst the thorns high up, while some had gained the sedgy bottom, but both had miserably perished where they fell, no kind hand was near to soften their sufferings. Grey bones, green uniforms, torn boots, a little flattened heap, each told a tale of tortured humanity. Many must have been quite boys, judging from the smallness of their boots.

There are a lot of people of whom I know more or less here, but I do not care to look them up. It is so difficult to meet people, and the distances are so great, that an

invitation to dinner is rather to be avoided. The cliffs here are like Guernsey, fine bold masses of limestone rising precipitously from indented creeks and bays, and little detached sentries of rock standing off the headlands. Kamiesh is a curious place, but the mud! Ameen! it is wonderful that the French have not followed our example at Balaklava and macadamised their roads. Their waggons have the greatest difficulty in dragging through, and the animals which carry supplies to the different divisions are exhausted at the outset of their journey. Their military roads are very bad, not a straight line, ups and downs, no attempt at levelling, and kept in bad repair. I saw Péliissier start from his headquarters in a rotten old Russian carriage with four half starved greys and two dirty postillions, attended by a squadron of ill-dressed French hussars on little cats of Turkish ponies—such a seedy turn out I never witnessed. The single Spahi who preceded the *cortège*, in his white burnous decorated with French and English medals, was the only respectable part of the whole. Péliissier is a bloated, ordinary looking man. I then met Sir William Codrington attended by an aide-de-camp and a single orderly, an 11th Hussar; very simple, very neat; he has sharp features and a quick intelligent look. Post closing, so good-bye.

BEFORE SEVASTOPOL, 21st March 1856.

DEAR MARY,

Me voici toujours. No steamer to carry me to Samsoon where I ought to have been yesterday, I write now to

send you enclosed Russian relics. You will observe that the silver crucifix has some of the Crimean mud attached to it, which I purposely abstained from removing. It was found on the body of a Russian in the Malakoff. The pewter star was on the remains of one of the Russians who died in a grotto of Inkerman. I took a thirty miles ride out to Phoros and back; it is to the east, on the coast, being I think the most southern point of the Crimea. The ride was beautiful. I went up the precipitous mount of the marine heights which over-top the harbour of Balaklava, and crossing the lines which formed our defence last year, and from which the Russians in vain tried to shell us, across a deep glen from a fine ridge of wooded mountain I descended into a rich valley, fully wooded and well watered, to the Tatar village of Vanutka, where the inhabitants still remain. Some of the girls were very pretty little things, shouting lustily "Bono Johnny, piastre," and then running away, half hiding themselves behind the doors of the wattled cottages. These poor people have suffered great privations; for two years they have been unable to plough their lands. I saw no sheep and but few poultry, the rest were no doubt devoured long ago by the French, who are very unscrupulous in their treatment of the people. Their great excuse is that they themselves are very ill provided, and have to depend greatly upon their own skill in foraging. Beyond we came to the villa of Petrowski, an odd little building topped by a Chinese dome glittering with green metal, the favourite covering of the Russians for their churches, etc. It was placed under the brow of a thickly wooded ridge sheltered from the cold, with a long slope down to the valley of Baidar, an acre or two of the

ground in front had been cleared of trees, and opened a glorious prospect of the rich dell below and the noble mountains opposite. Baidar I found to be a large and stable village. The Tatars still resided there, and I saw a good-looking specimen of the race in a damsel who stood in a doorway watching us—half shy and half accustomed to strangers—for there was a large French post here, and their military trains dotted the line of road. I then ascended the next range of mountains and soon reached firm snow, over which I travelled till I got to the pass of Phoros, where Potemkin erected a triumphal arch to Catherine; a great solid gateway of hewn grey stone, perfectly preserved, very heavy and without a shade of taste or elegance. Its position was, however, beautiful. From a depression on the ridge on one side rose a succession of wood, grey and cold in its winter mantle, on the other towered a precipice of sharply defined rock. In front the ground shelved in rapid descent to the sea, beautifully blue in the clear bright frost, a noble cape bounding the view; behind us lay the soft valley of Baidar, hedged in with its barriers of mountain and forest. In this position was the last French outpost in this direction, and a strong one it was. The gateway was blocked by stone barricades, beyond rose a parapet of fascines and earth, trenches were cut in the mud, altogether a post more easily held than captured. I wished to have turned the next point to visit a tunnel through which the road lay to Woronzoff's villa of Aloufka; but the French sentry objected thereto, and as in war might is right, I turned back again, varying my way by passing through Kamarra, a village destroyed by the French. It took me through a most wild and romantic defile, the

grey rocks varied by oak copse, and junipers and stunted pines lifting themselves in savage grandeur from the bed of a noisy little brook, which fumed and fretted over the many barriers which opposed its course. As I emerged from it I saw opposite, high up, hanging on a mountain side, the camp of the Royals. I directed my way to the Sardinian camp, and very pretty it was with little stone and mud huts neatly laid out in lines, and pine trees planted to mark the paths. Both Sardinians and French beat us hollow in the tastefulness of their arrangements. We excel them in the solidity and perfection of our appliances, but here the Sardinians closely follow us; the construction of their railway and high roads approach nearly to ours. The French have no idea of road-making, but finish their military works beautifully. Their trenches, parapets, etc., are remarkably neat, while ours are quite the contrary, and the great camps of tents of the French are exquisitely laid out and planted with pines, gardens dug, and everything utilised. Iron hoops and tins of meat-cans turned into barriers, doors, chimneys, etc.

Another day I rode to Tchorgoom, on the Tchernaya. Here the Sardinian outposts prevented my approaching the river, and I directed my steps to the "traktir" (bridge). On reaching the French posts I followed the line of the stream, but was not allowed across the bridge. Many of the Russian soldiers were on the opposite banks, exchanging coins and other things with the allied troops. The English predominated. They looked in very good case, and the hostile armies certainly show no personal animosity; all was goodwill and courtesy, with the most ludicrous attempts to make themselves understood. Shots

were constantly fired in the reeds on both sides, where the river runs over low ground, forming a wide extent of marsh; but they were directed against the ducks, which, flying about disconsolately up and down where they had lived so lately quietly amidst the din of war, must have greatly regretted the armistice which diverted both sides against them.

The ground in front of Sevastopol, the white town itself, the grey rocks cropping out everywhere, the tufted herbage, the indented harbour, the blue waters, all recall Malta. It is only when one gets into the deeper dips of the soil—the bolder promontory, the brown copses, the spongy turf spangled with primroses, snowdrops, and hyacinthine flowers—that the similarity ceases. The ruined city of Sevastopol I believe I have described to you; I shall therefore be curt. Viewed from a distance, swelling up from the harbour in hills, its white houses and Grecian temple look very pretty; but viewed close I was disappointed, with the exception of the barracks, which are noble buildings, and some of the principal edifices, constructed of a freestone identical with that of Malta; the remaining dwellings built of rough stone plastered with white lime, and only a ground floor and a tiled roof, are mean. The streets are hugely wide but quite rough, the elevations of native rock cut down and nothing more, just like many of the country roads about Malta. The chief streets in the neighbourhood of the Admiralty have been macadamised, and flagged on either side with spacious *trottoirs*. It is not nearly so strong as I had supposed, and before the erection of the Malakoff and the Redan there was nothing to prevent us from going in. If the huge batteries

which lined the port were sufficient to prevent our ships from going in, they must have been sufficient to blow the Russian liners off the waters, and we might have thrown up battery upon battery with the *débris* of houses and earth. Certainly the Russians have greater cause to be proud of the defence than we of the attack. Valletta is fifty times more difficult to touch than Sevastopol. The Redan is a formidable work. I went in at the point where we stormed, at the salient angle; the road lay across the tombs of the Russian dead, who were buried in the fosse and thus bridged the way across. Not to have carried the place at once argues something very wrong. Being an open work behind, it is true the Russian columns advanced without a check, but had our men gone to meet them and been followed by others in a continuous stream from the trenches, the Moscovs might have been driven down the hill upon Sevastopol. The real difficulty was getting over the ground between our approaches and the Redan. That done, and the Malakoff stormed by the French, the fire which proved so deadly—and from what I saw every foot of space must have been traversed by every conceivable missile from a 13-inch shell to a musket ball—must have ceased, and the supports might have poured inwards scatheless until they crossed bayonets with the Russians in the work itself. The real difficulty had been surmounted and there, God knows why, we stopped. The Malakoff, to the unprofessional eye, is immensely strong, barrier interlaced with barrier, fascines, gabions and earth crossing in high ramparts. Inside all bore testimony to the desperate nature of the conflict. Broken cannon, upturned carriages, great holes burst up by shells, shot strewn all around, strips of uniforms, guns in position

with piles of grape and cannister behind them, just as they stood when the Russians were driven from them. The difficulty in the Malakoff was to push the Russians out of their maze of defence, and had they not been surprised this would have been hardly possible. Once out they could not get in again. The Redan was the reverse, the difficulty was to prevent their returning. In this we failed, while the French succeeded, and they deserve great credit for doing so. In the midst of the Malakoff is a square space of stones beaten hard into the ground; this is surrounded by gabions. In the centre is a cross, and on it is an inscription running something like this: "Soldat Français, gloire, victoire, mort." And this was the price of many lives! here were buried those who fell in the assault. The shot, shell, etc., are not merely in partial range of fire, square mile upon square mile is covered with them. Death must have sat upon each breath one drew. It is very wonderful, and the zigzag lines of approaches are very curious. The weather has been bitterly cold since I have been here; thermometer down to 21° of Fahrenheit and the wind sweeps like bolts of ice across these elevations. As I rode shivering through trenches in which lay patches of snow and frozen pools of water, I wondered how day after day the troops could live through such exposure. One night would have been enough for me; even now in the hut my breath freezes at night upon moustache and blanket.

I have seen little of the Highlanders, not having been through their division, for their camp is of enormous extent, and the eye can only take in from commanding points mere corners of all the troops I have seen. You may tell Eleanor that her pets the Horse Artillery are

decidedly the finest men, and the animals are both good of their kind and in capital order and condition. I have been to church, this being Good Friday; service was held under a shed, the men standing in a square; the responses were chanted very well. It was interesting, and since leaving Constantinople I had seen nothing in that way of course.

SAMSOON, 13th April 1856.

DEAR MARY,

You want to know how I got to the Crimea. I went with Assistant-Commissary General Smith in the *Lion*, and a particularly disagreeable passage we had. I embarked late one evening, such as seamen call dirty-looking, the sea was getting up, the wind came cold and wild over the grey waters, the clouds were driving by in full, fleecy masses. We weighed at five next morning, snow falling thick and the gale rising, big seas breaking over our decks. Next morning there was a bright sun, but the snow was clinging in hard, white lines on masts and yards, and a cutting wind was coming off the Crimean coast; a fine, bold, iron-bound coast, glorious cliffs something like Guernsey, and a Genoese castle on starboard, but no apparent entrance amidst that line of hard mountain. We went round a point, passed the *Leander*, were up to the cattle pier at two P.M., and that is how I got to the Crimea. I lodged with my friend Grahame Craig, Chief Accountant Land Transport Corps, a connection of M'Murdo's. I slept on the floor of Craig's hut on two Turkey rugs which, providentially, I had

brought with me. It was so cold that I slept in my dressing trousers and flannel shooting jacket, and had one woollen blanket, one cotton padded Turkish coverlid, two Maltese Nankin cotton coverlids, one Scotch shawl, doubled, and finally my cloth toga over me, and with all that my moustache froze to my blanket. I returned by cattle ship *Tonning*, and embarked with a bad headache; we left at two, and I greatly regretted not being well enough to see the going out of Balaklava harbour. We entered Sinope early, Guarracino came on board, and we went off with the two Accountant-Generals to look at some sheep, with the intention of buying them to be converted into rations for H.B.M.'s troops. He put me on his pet horse, the grey Arab, known as the mad colt of the mad Consul, and away we went: such mud! ameen! amān! but the country looked very pretty in its glittering mantle of snow, which had only thawed off the low hills around the town. Next day we went all over the Land Transport Corps depôt of mules and horses, and over the workshops, steam saw mills, forges, etc. At ten next morning we left, and got into Samsoon at ten P.M., at once landed, got to the house, and found all asleep; turned into bed with intense satisfaction, for my spring mattress was a welcome change after planks, rugs, and ships' beds.

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[Peace having been abruptly declared by the Emperor Napoleon without consulting England, it was hopeless for us to think of carrying on alone the projected campaign against the Russians in Georgia, in preparation for which large quantities of transport animals—horses, mules, and camels—had been purchased everywhere

between the Black Sea and Baghdad; and large depôts formed, especially at Sinope. On the conclusion of peace these animals had to be disposed of, and in a poor country like Turkey it would have been impossible, in any one spot, to find purchasers for them. General Codrington, the English Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea, then applied to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, H.B.M.'s Ambassador at the Porte, to recommend to him a man of undoubted confidence, with a full knowledge of the country and the languages, to undertake the sale of these animals in the manner judged most advisable for the public interest. Lord Stratford thereupon wrote to Mr Ross, then Acting British Consul at Samsoon, to ask whether he would undertake the work, adding that he knew of no one more capable for such a charge. After a few hours' reflection Mr Ross replied to the Ambassador that he was willing to undertake the responsibility, provided means were taken for the due custody of the specie which would be encashed on the sales of the animals. These conditions were at once accepted, and General Codrington furnished him with a military accountant, a clerk, a doctor, a lieutenant, and thirteen rank and file. Such precautions were necessary, as much of the country to be traversed was rendered very insecure by roving bands of tribal brigands, both Koords and Arabs, rivers had frequently to be crossed at dangerous fords, and tents in outlying camps, and flimsy houses in native towns, offered but little protection against robbers; for naturally it would be known everywhere that he had large sums of money with him.

Near every town a camp was formed, and criers were sent into the streets to inform the inhabitants that a sale of animals belonging to the Queen of England would be held at the tents of the "Ingleez Pasha," as Mr Ross was everywhere called. At nine in the morning the sale began; he sat in front of his tent with a small riding

cane in his hand, and gave a tap after the traditional once, twice, thrice. At first the people did not understand and the bidding was slow, but when they found that the English Pasha would not listen to any excuses, and that his tap was final, the bids were fast and furious. The sale was continued at the various towns until there were no more buyers, and then the tents were struck and the long convoy moved on.

He traversed the whole of Asia Minor, from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and his journey was considered a great feat; I have even heard it compared to the famous march of Xenophon and the 10,000. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe knew that Mr Ross had the gift of inspiring confidence and respect amongst Orientals, who admired his personal courage and straightforward dealing; he also had a high idea of Mr Ross's political acumen, and desired him to report privately to him on the state of the provinces through which he passed. This, of course, entailed a great deal of writing, and accounts for the few letters he wrote to his sister during that time. Before arriving at Aleppo Mr Ross wrote to H.E. that he would now cease troubling him with more despatches, as there was a Consul, into whose province he did not wish to intrude. The only answer he received was the following laconic and characteristic note from Mr Alison, the Chief Secretary at Constantinople: "My dear Ross, H.E. charges me to say how much he regrets that you have discontinued your reports, which he found so interesting that he had copies sent both to the Foreign Office and to the Porte. Fire away.—Yours, Alison."]

SAMSOON, 1st June 1856.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I was indeed surprised to get your letter from Constantinople. I think there is every probability that your visit will be attended with success, for a bank was much needed there. I think it ought to be conducted on the principles of the banks in Egypt, and I understand on the Danube also. It ought to have its own produce, and bill, brokers, as this system brings in an immense additional gain, and enables the bank to ascertain the exact position of the place and the state of the different houses. It is a system which spurs up business greatly. The brokers of the bank suggest operations to its clients and it makes the requisite advances. It gets the brokerage on the sale or purchase, and in many cases on both, where the buyer and seller have accounts with the bank; and then, necessarily, it gets the negotiation of the bills in payment, besides the interest in advance. I never got your letter about this undertaking, and should be glad to have a prospectus. Here, for the moment, I do not anticipate much business; when grain affairs are active something might be done in discounting bills, but at present business here is transacted for cash. It would take some time to accustom people in this country to a system of trade which they have never seen.

You will have heard that I am about to start on an expedition to Yuzgat and Sivas to sell horses for the Land Transport Corps. I anticipate a pleasant trip, as with such a number of animals I shall be able to carry what I please with me. It seems determined, as well as I can judge from the papers, to follow a non-intervention

policy in this country. I doubt the possibility of it. Without an active surveillance on the part of the European ambassadors, aided by their consuls, nothing will be done by the Turks, and this surveillance will indubitably lead to interference. All the determinations to the contrary will not prevent it. It is a necessary consequence where an active and ever-progressing people are brought into contact with an indolent and half-barbarous nation. The Turks will do nothing without being driven, and it is a great pity that we have not a permanent occupation of the country.

When the Turks supposed that the Allies intended remaining at Constantinople, they were quite quiet and submissive, and simulated, I will not say affection or gratitude, but goodwill towards us. The moment they found we were to leave a change occurred. They at once exhibited the hatred they bear to the Christian nations; where it did not manifest itself by overt acts, it showed itself in a hundred little things, trifling in themselves, but sufficient to show how the current set. As to the "Humayun" (the great Reform Act of Sultan Mahmoud) there is not, I am convinced, the slightest intention on the part of the Provincial Governors to carry it out. In many places it has not been read, in others it has not been heard of by the people, and nowhere has any intention been evinced to execute it. That a reform is going on in Turkey I believe, but it is the pressure from without, which has created, and which sustains it, and that the ameliorated condition of the Rayahs is immediately owing to the much-decried consuls is equally certain. Without the consuls nothing would have been done. An ambassador may take the initiative and obtain concessions, but the consuls alone

can enforce their execution; and without the perpetual jogging they give to the Pashas nothing would be done. If the suggestion in Dr Sandwith's book of sending out only fresh men from the English universities—philosophers, lawyers and naturalists—as consuls to the East, were carried out, instead of employing men well versed in the languages and habits of the country, the difference would soon be felt. It is astonishing how long it is ere an Englishman can appreciate and understand the depths and falseness of the Oriental character, and what crude and erroneous notions they get hold of. Here is Dr Sandwith, who has been long enough in the East, one would think, to have learnt something, yet he comes out with absurdities which are laughable to us, but which in England are regarded as gospel. He has not even discovered that the Mekemeh and the Cadi's tribunal are one and the same thing, but mixes up the Migliss and the Mekemeh, evidently quite ignorant of the attributes of either. And then he writes learnedly on the East, and Eastern matters, and doubtless believes that he would make a pattern consul. My belief is that the greatest absurdities in the East are committed, not by those who have been long in the country, but precisely by raw Englishmen who have just entered it, and who are always apt to see causes of offence, insult and danger, where none exist.

That our consular body would bear weeding with great advantage is unfortunately too true; but I suspect the same may be said of every large body of men, whether English or foreign. In the French service I have seen some very strange examples. Botta was a scientific man but a d——d bad consul, and Bourqueney thought him

mad; the consul at Mosul was a hasty fool and had to be removed to a subordinate post; the one at Baghdad was more extravagant in his conduct than any Englishman and did no credit to his countrymen; and I have no doubt that were the foreign consular body to be carefully inspected, as many fools, madmen and men of ill-repute would be found, as in ours. Well you must be tired of all this, so good-bye and let us trust that fate will at last consent to our meeting: it is curious how near we have often been without seeing one another since we parted at Tell Kief, near Mosul.

SAMSOON, 22nd June 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

I was to have been well on my journey to-day, but the *Calcutta*, with sailing transport *Crest of the Wave*, arrived yesterday evening with mules and horses, and I had to put things *en train* for their disembarkation. I leave at daylight to-morrow, with four trusty followers of my own, to overtake my escort and 1130 animals which I sent on this morning. I have sent up 1000 animals, there are at least 2000 more waiting for me at Amassia, a convoy of 400 will follow me, and probably many more. I have also 3600 camels.

Your letter just came in time to send me forth on my wandering all cheery. It is not impossible that I may eventually find myself in Syria. Young de Launcey, who was in the navy, presented himself to me as Land Transport Corps officer, in charge of animals by *Crest of the*

Wave. He is very anxious that I should require him to attend me with all his men, which I have the power to do, but I am afraid of having too many soldiers with me. They get drunk and give trouble.

AMASSIA, 30th June 1856.

DEAR MARY,

I left Samsoun on the 23rd and rode a distance of fourteen hours to Ladik which I reached at three in the afternoon, having rested my animals for one and a half hours at the ruined caravanserai of Tchakkaly Khan (the Jackal Caravanserai), fifteen miles from Samsoun and situated in a valley through which runs a small river. The way lay the whole distance over hills and mountains of rounded forms, covered with alternate wood and cultivation, and traversed by broad earth tracks. The soil is a deep tenacious clay which in winter turns into a very slough of despond, extremely fatiguing for horses and impassable for the rough ox carts of the country. Even if my horses had not had quite enough, I should have been compelled to stop at Ladik, having business to transact with the local authorities of the district. Otherwise had I had fresh horses I should have liked to push on and reach Amassia, eight hours further, that evening. I had not an ache nor a sensation of fatigue; I felt in the humour and trim to have gone day and night across Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf.

The Mufti I found was giving an entertainment *al fresco* in his garden to the Cadi, two colonels, and other

worthies, and thither I repaired. I entered a large enclosure in which grew gigantic pear trees and a wilderness of weeds. In one corner was a reservoir through which ran a stream of water, by it were placed carpets and on them were seated the host and his guests, busily smoking their pipes, and exchanging a set of conventional compliments very wearying to the European ear. Folding my legs under me down I sat, tailor fashion, and discoursed business, conditions of country, and very sparse compliments. Dinner was then served; soup into which a dozen spoons dipped with remarkable celerity, followed by the pride of the East—a roast lamb. It presently became a ruin, the rib bones sticking up from amidst the very excellent stuffing of rice and raisins. After the concluding pilaff we repaired to the tank to wash off the grease which adhered to our fingers and mouths; some had previously carefully sucked their fingers with evident relish. Next morning, rather late, I got the papers which I needed, and leaving one horse behind me, started fresh on my gallop to Amassia. The weather was bright, the roads were good, the horses fair, my attendants horsemen, the woods beautiful, sunlight exquisite, and the azalea pontica copse a sheet of odoriferous golden bloom. We dashed along, swords clanking, mantles waving, with strong frames and light hearts. I entered Amassia, the birthplace of Strabo, together with all the rest of the party who were under my orders, and who had had one day's start of me. Next day I shifted the camp from Zinganeh Meidan (Gipsies' Square) on the west bank of the river, to the south, to Sultan Bayazid Duzdeh.

Here I am in the house of Mr Krug, a Swiss merchant, and a very nice place it is, built on the western slope of

the valley. Below us, extending north and south, is the town buried in masses of green, dense plantations of mulberry trees for the rearing of silk-worms. Opposite is a craggy conical mountain, crowned by the remains of a strong fortress of olden times, before whose walls Timurlane waited six months in vain. Below, escarped on its face, are what are called the Tombs of the Kings, hewn out in grottoes in the hard limestone. Through garden and town winds the "Yeshil Irmak" (Green River) the ancient Iris, turning in its course huge Persian wheels to raise water for the purpose of irrigation, and crossed by five bridges. Altogether it is a lovely scene and I greatly regret that my pencil is unable to transfer it to paper. In the town is the mosque of Sultan Bayazid, he who lost the battle of Angora and was carried about in an iron cage by Timurlane, who gave his wives to his own horse-keepers. Since that time none of the Turkish Sultans have ever taken a married wife, to prevent the recurrence of such dishonour. I rode up to the castle which is formed of groups of round and square towers, and curtain walls barring every access; the cross stone over the portal was a bit of frieze bearing a Greek inscription. Hence I descended by the Zinganeh Meidan across a bridge to the mosque of Sultan Bayazid; the general appearance of the large courtyard and the face of the structure was not unlike the chief mosques of Constantinople, and the portal was of handsome Saracenic honeycomb design with two small pilasters on each side of the porch of verde antique. Thence I recrossed to the east bank of the fine river, the Yeshil Irmak, and ascended to the tombs of the kings; grottoes hewn out of the rock, some of which were nearly detached by excavated passages

round them, cutting the roof apart from the superincumbent rock. In one of the smaller tombs were to be traced frescoes of saints, but much defaced. In a ruined bath near by was scratched on the wall an inscription to commemorate the imprisonment of twenty French soldiers, taken in Egypt during the occupation of Napoleon and sent hither in captivity. On our way we passed some neglected gardens which were "wakuf" (church property), and like all property of that description were fast going to ruin for want of care. The "wakuf" rents are reckoned at above a million of piastres a year (120 piastres to the £). We returned across the river to the house and passed on our way the Timar Khaneh, or mad-house. The porch is very beautiful—Saracenic; inside was an oblong court surrounded by columns, and small dens. To the columns were chained the unhappy patients by their necks, and in one of the dens we found a quantity of casques and horse armour, rotting to pieces with rust.

The sales of the animals continue satisfactorily. I have the camp just under my windows, and I shall remain here until I find that nothing more is to be done, then I go to Marsivan, Tchoroom and Yuzgat, and wherever else besides fate may have destined.

CAMP, YUZGAT, July 1856.

DEAR MARY,

A Saÿ¹ has just come in from Samsoun and brought me, among others, a letter from you. On the 2nd I left

¹ Running footmen used as postmen. They go at a steady trot, taking very little rest in the twenty-four hours, and carry the letters in a wallet

Amassia; the convoys, escort, etc., I sent by the valley road, and crossing over the mountains descended by the "Robber's Pass" into the plain of Sulova. We met no robbers—we were not the kind of game they look for—my compact knot of six well-mounted and well-armed men, glistening with sword, pistol and gun, were not to be touched with impunity. We dashed merrily along our path, eight hours of distance was done in three and a half,¹ and I rode in to breakfast at Marsivan. It is a town of 3500 houses, Islam and Rayah, with large bazaars; and being market day they were well thronged with a busy crowd. There was a fine old portal of Saracenic style belonging to a college falling into decay, like all else in this country. I was lodged at a Protestant house, belonging to the American missionaries, where was a native reader who kept a school. The town was like all other Turkish cities, and the houses had a very earthen look, being built of mud bricks. It was in the plain near the roots of the chain of Taoushan Dagħ (the Hare

on their back, to which is attached a little bell to prevent people from stopping them, as stopping and starting again is very fatiguing. They cover 100 miles in twenty-four hours, that is to say 100 miles by road, but their knowledge of the short cuts over the mountains lessens the distance. Round the leg, under the knee, they tie a tight woollen bandage to prevent the sinews starting, but the men break down after very few years. Robbers never interfere with them as they do not carry valuables, but occasionally they are attacked by bears. A Say of Erzeroum, called Hassan, was assailed by a bear in the valley of Marsat Dereh, between Baiboort and Erzeroum, and defended himself with his staff nine feet long, while hallooing as loud as he could. Fortunately a shepherd was on the other side of the hill, and his dogs heard and came to the rescue of Hassan. Three of these large Turkish sheep-dogs can tackle a bear; they are superb animals, but very savage.

¹ An hour is three miles in the mountains, four miles in the plain.

Mountain), and was belted by orchards and vineyards. The women were very pretty, with soft, delicate complexions and fine eyes. I found a state of society little changed since the days of the Janisaries. There is a Dereh Bey, or valley chieftain, who lives at a place called Haggi Kioi (the Pilgrim Village), five hours distant, and maintains a body of thirty or fifty mounted retainers who live by plunder, and whom he employs to put out of the way all those who are obnoxious to him. A Christian who had a claim against him for £500 received warning at Amassia, whither he had come to meet me, not to return by a certain road as two of Sahatoglü's men were waiting for him.

At Haggi Koi is an argentiferous lead mine, at Taoushan Dagħ, three hours from here, is another, and further on are old copper mines where lately ancient mining instruments have been found. The river is called the Bakir Su (Copper River).

On the 4th July I left Marsivan, and passing over another range of mountains through a defile called Kanlu Poonghar, or the Spring of Blood, from a bright fountain of water which gushed out of the rocks and where annually many murders are committed on travellers, I emerged into a plain and stopped at a little village to breakfast and to let the convoys come up. The Kanlu Poonghar was a very pretty and romantic dell; we dived down into a deep ravine, grey cliffs stood in broken masses sparsely covered with pines, a little streamlet trickled down the bottom, over-grown with hazel and thorn, up which climbed honeysuckle, covered with bunches of sweet bloom. Leaving the village we mounted another chain, and entered a long pass of three hours called Sitlik Bogħaz; at short

distances were guard-houses for the protection of caravans, but since last year, owing to the vigour of the present Pasha of Yuzgat, they are not required, and are fast crumbling into ruin. Immediately outside the pass, in the plain, was Tchoroom, a Turkish town of 3000 houses, another muddy looking place, where I lodged with a Turk, and sat cross-legged on silk mattresses whenever I was not at the auction of the animals. Knives and forks I have discarded, and in Turkey live as do the Turks. At the close of one of the sales news came that English cavalry, commanded by an English Pasha and Kaimakam, had arrived. You may imagine I was not a little puzzled as to who these could be. Presently the Pasha was pointed out coming to see me—an Englishman true enough, and mounted on a fine Arab. It was Colonel O'Reilly of the Osmanli irregular cavalry, with the remains of his regiment which he was disbanding in the various towns where they had been enrolled. He had 260 Bashi Bozooks with him, as picturesque a set of dare-devils as you could desire; fine men, all well mounted and splendid riders. They are devoted to O'Reilly.

After an auction which was well attended, I mounted at three P.M., joined O'Reilly and his Bashi Bozooks outside the town and rode with them for three hours until we reached the gorge, through which we passed in an hour and encamped at Baba Oglu (the Father's Son). We struck camp at four next morning and reached Aladjah (the Chequered town) at eight A.M.; at first our road lay through a pretty plain and afterwards across undulating corn land, till we reached Hussein Ova (the Plain of Hussein). On the level plain at Aladjah we turned out of our road a short distance to see the shrine of Hussein Ghazy (the

Warrior Saint Hussein), of which my host, the Mudeer of Aladjah, had told me wonderful tales. I found a Mohammedan turbeh (domed tomb) of early style, in ruins; in one room was the shrine of the warrior saint, and on one side of the building lay a meadow shaded by trees, under which sat groups of Turkish peasantry who had come to pay their respects to Hussein Ghazy. Close to the tomb was a tank into which rushed a spring of clear water, thickly tenanted by small fish which are not molested. An old woman, the guardian of the place, broke some eggs into the water to feed the fish; one of much larger dimensions than the others, parti-coloured black and white, was pointed out to us as the sultan. We here gradually began to ascend, and turning over a flat hill-top, descended into a pretty village, houses, orchards and gardens intermixed, and surrounded by grey masses of rock. After passing for three hours through the defile we ascended a rounded mass of hill and reached the village of Manoossah, where I had sent my tents on ahead with my cook and baggage, and expected to find all ready, but the baggage had all gone off somewhere else, no one knew where. While waiting to see if it turned up a person arrived from Ali Riza, Pasha of Yuzgat, to compliment O'Reilly and myself, and to fix the hour of our entry next morning, as we were to be received with *éclat*. In the absence of my tents I was conducted to the house of the head man, and carpets were spread for me outside to avoid the fleas. My long boots were drawn off, sword and revolver unbelted, my legs duly and decorously tucked under me, and the Pasha's envoy left me to go to O'Reilly, and bring him to the same village in order that we might

start together next day. The village stood on the side of a valley, and the head man's house was the highest up. I looked down upon the houses and into the bottom of the valley, where were the rest of my party. There were a few willow trees by the side of the little stream. On the opposite hill-side was the Mosul convoy with 100 men, another of Baghdad was an hour further on, a Turkish convoy was lower down, and 100 Bashis were scattered through the village. Crack! went a pistol. I pricked up my ears—but I knew these people are always firing. Another! A hurrah and a puff of white smoke from the hillside! Another shot from the willows! Another from the Mosul convoy! That the Bashi Bozook and my men were firing at one another was the conviction which flashed across me. I dragged on my boots, belted on my sword, seized my pistol, and ran down the hill with the intention of putting myself between the belligerents and stopping the fire. I knew the Arabs would not fire at me, and I doubted the Bashi Bozook venturing to do so. However it was just over as I reached. There had been a fight about a donkey-load of grass, and the guns were fired in testimony of all animosity being at an end—evaporated in smoke, in fact. I called the two captains of the Mosul convoy and the Bashi Bozook, and told them to keep in their men. It was lucky no blood was drawn and that my Baghdad Arabs were not there, as they are a turbulent set and lives might have been lost.

The start next morning was splendid. We mounted from the village and turned the brow of the hill, an amphitheatre of mountains opened before us, all bending to a common centre, the head of a valley, through which

ran a small river. The ground was covered with oak copse, with dark, shining, glossy foliage, except where the slopes of decomposing rock were too rapid, and in the water courses. The soil was slaty grey and lilac. The road, though wide, would not admit the hundreds of men and animals of which our party consisted, for we were quite a little army. So down the mountain sides we poured, along the sheep paths, or through the bushes. The Bashi Bozook in all variety of costume, blazing with scarlet, blue, and gold, their long lances gleaming in the sun; the Arabs in the costume of the desert, with bright "egelias" streaming from their heads; the scarlet tahktera-vans which constituted my ambulances; by streams, in lines, by twos and threes, down we went, standards fluttering, kettledrums beating. It was one of those bright pictures which alone the East can produce. On nearing the town we were met by the Kiayah, his kettledrums joined ours, and six pairs of tom-toms beat a Pasha's march in front of us. Our procession was quite imposing. The treasure chest, accompanied by its English officers and mounted escort, was in advance; then followed the standards of the Bashi Bozook, the men ranged in two lines wide apart; then the six "soitarees," with pointed caps from which hung foxes' tails, beating their drums, the Kiayah Bey, O'Reilly, and myself riding abreast, his officer slightly in the rear, and then a crowd of attendants, behind the tahktera-vans and long lines of mules. On the way were drawn up three camel Yuzbashis (commanders of a hundred men, *i.e.* captains) from Diabekir with their men, who came to make their obeisances on coming under my command; with them were their drummers and

"soitaires" dressed in grotesque costumes, wearing hideous masks, long pointed caps and feathers, with drawn swords. They danced in strange antics before my horse, their Yuzbashis and our Yuzbashis mounted their horses, the men their camels, which they galloped, trotted and wheeled in mimic warfare of the desert. As we approached the town we found the whole population had come out to see us. The excited horsemen dashed wildly about, spears quivered, swords flashed, khamas (daggers) gleamed, pistols and guns were fired in quick succession, the Bashi Bozook shouted their war cry, the "tumbeliks" beat the war call, and women clustered thickly around in their white veils, like snow drifts in patches along the road. The fierce career of the horses, the strange movements of the camels, the mixture of Oriental costume and European uniforms, formed a scene which will not soon be again witnessed even in Turkey; and as we passed through the amazed streets of unsophisticated Yuzgat in triumph, I wondered what the shade of old Suleiman Bey Chappanoglu, who founded the city, thought of it all, as we wound round his splendid mosque. Our "konak" was at Ohan Tchorbagees¹ a very wealthy man of great influence, who keeps up the state of one of the old Turkish Beys. He is quite patriarchal in his way of living. His sons, though married, cannot sit down in his presence, and the younger brothers pay the same respect to the eldest. He is

¹ John, the Soup Dispenser; a title now used to designate a Christian merchant, formerly indicative of high rank among the Janissaries who, in times of rebellion, used to march through the streets bearing their large soup-cauldrons on a pole between two men, as a kind of standard to summon every member of the corps to arms.

waited upon by a host of attendants, nearly all relations or connections. His house is a group of dwellings, his own and that of his sons. I am in the Divan Khaneh, or reception-house, and into the hareem I have not been, for, though a Christian, he maintains the same rule with respect to his women as a Mussulman. Our dinner and breakfast are composed of twenty dishes each; my cover-lids are of gold brocade edged with silk and if I move a servant springs forward to assist me. I abandon myself quietly to them and let myself be waited on and tended like a child; such is their fashion. My host is greatly grieved that I neither smoke pipes nor drink raky, and I am obliged to eat much more than is good for me to please him. You should have seen the old man's face when he learned that I was not married. He had made up his mind that I was the father of a flourishing family, and was really grieved that he was mistaken.

Yuzgat was built about a hundred years ago by Suleiman Bey, the founder of the Chappanoglu family; he encircled it, and a considerable space around, with a wall as a defence against the Koords. The protection thus afforded attracted people from the surrounding districts, and you may judge how large the town now is when I tell you it has nine mosques and eight baths.

Next day, 9th July, we called upon Ali Rizah Pasha who welcomed us with great courtesy. The palace was an oblong, straggling building in bad repair, as is usual with Turkish Serais. The room we were received in was large with a handsome gilt ceiling; an alcove was painted, evidently by an European hand, and so were the arabesques in Pompeian style on the walls. The old gentleman had seen much of his own country and had even been

to Bombay. He is a fine old fellow, a follower of Sultan Mahmoud's, and by his master's order was one of the first to don the Nizam¹ dress, and go through all the grades up to his present rank of Mushir. He has put the province in good order, and throughout the villages he was universally praised for the security he had enforced, and the justice he administered. Until his arrival the country was overrun by nomad horsemen who, in parties of five to thirty, pillaged villages and caravans and kept the whole country in a state of constant terror and turmoil. Doghanoglu, the great chief of the Rushwans, he caused to be surprised as he was waiting in the pass near Tchoroom for merchants going to the fair of Yapraklee (the Leafy fair, so-called because all the booths are made of green boughs). In the fight Doghanoglu fell and some fifty of his men. This brought the Koords to their senses, and the Pasha is making them build a "casabah" with its dependent villages in the neighbourhood of Tchitchek Dag (the Flower Mountain). Tcherkess Bey, chief of the Avshars, tendered his allegiance, which was accepted, and the rank of Capoodgee Bashi given him. With four hundred of his horsemen he has just brought in three hundred Koordish families who had run away from Yuzgat to the Uzun Yailah (the Long Pasture, extending from Sivas nearly to Kharpoot), whom he found in the neighbourhood of Hekim Khan, and partly by threats, partly by promises, caused to return peacefully. The Pasha hopes to have secured the safety of the roads as far as Diarbekir by this measure. H. E. naïvely observed to me that if an encounter had taken place between

¹ The disciplined infantry created by Sultan Mahmoud.

Tcherkess Bey's Avshars and the Koords, the Government would have gained whichever side had lost, as the fewer who remained of either tribe the better.

On the 13th, Colonel O'Reilly and his people left for Kaisariah, and I rode out with Karabet to his father's (Ohan Tchorbagee) garden and kiosk where I remarked a white marble Corinthian capital which they told me had been brought from the ruins of Neffes Kioi (the Breezy Village, the ancient Pteria). Thence we crossed the valley through the gardens, and ascended the opposite hillside amongst scrubby oak, until we came to the pine woods where we dismounted at a spring, and my companions drank racky and smoked. From this point the town looked large, spreading up into the valley of the hill against which it is built. The air all day was quite chill.

The auctions are going on well so I shall remain here several days more. I rode with Ohan Tchorbagee up to Sooklik, from the summit of the hill above the pine trees we had a most extensive view with Ergêz Dag (Argæus) seen in the distance. On our return we met a procession of horsemen followed by two men bearing trays on which were clothes, and carts shrouded with shawls, going to escort a bride to her husband's house. Kettle-drums were beating and pistols being fired off. We were invited to the bridegroom's house and found the rooms very clean and the walls nicely plastered and painted in arabesque, the ceiling was also painted.

YUZGAT, 24th July 1856.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

Here I am a month on my travels. I left Samsoon on the 23rd June and have had splendid weather, and been successful in the object of my journey, which as you know is to sell Government animals. My path has been Amassia, Marsivan and Tchoroom, a new line for me. The features of the country are those of all the tableland of Anatolia and Armenia—rounded mountains supporting great plains—so it is useless to give you any lengthy description of what your mind's eye will at once bring before you. To me however it was interesting as the road hither from Amassia led through all the great corn districts whence the wheat and barley comes down for shipment at Samsoon, and I was glad to see a country with which I may later have much to do.

One day whilst selling off my animals at the door of my tent I heard in the far distance a military band. As it came nearer the tune seemed familiar to me, and at last, to my surprise, I recognised "The British Grenadiers." It was the band of one of the *Redif* (Reserve) battalions of the Kaisariah regiment, which had been made over to us for service in the Sea of Azof. On their way from the Bosphorus to the Crimea these troops had mutinied, indignant at having been placed under the orders of the Infidels. They were now returning to their native quarters to be disbanded, all well dressed, with cowhide boots above their knees, and their belts full of English sovereigns and florins. Loud were they in praise of the punctuality with which their English officers had

paid them *without any deductions*, and of the good treatment they had received in hospital. They were my best customers in the purchase of animals. At the same time arrived the active battalion of the same regiment, returning from Kars, where of course they were under Turkish command. They were dressed in rags, their feet swathed in strips of linen and sandals, and they had not a piastre in their pockets. The contrast between these two battalions of the same regiment excited general comment among their co-religionists, and increased the admiration for the service of the English Queen, upon whose head they call for a thousand blessings. Our service is as popular as that of the French is hated, and our name for power, justice and generosity rings all through Asia Minor. Many, not excepting the Mussulmans, long for us to take possession of the country. They have a common belief that we are about to occupy the waste lands, especially Veren Sheher (the district of the Ruined City) and that we are going to rebuild its ruined towns and villages, to make roads and render the country flourishing. This idea is prevalent in the villages and is popular with the Turks. The flood of English gold which poured into Anatolia in payment of grain, cattle and animals, has wrought great good and favourably impressed the inhabitants. The effigy of our Queen has penetrated into the pettiest hamlets; true it has not remained in the hands of the villagers, as they have paid it all away to meet the requisitions of their own Government. The Porte called for certain quantities of grain and other provisions for the army, to be delivered by the districts either at Samsoun or Erzeroum. Generally the people were able to produce the provisions in kind,

although not always, for in many instances no regard was paid to the natural products of the districts, and they had to buy from others what they had not themselves, to the great loss of the poor and the great benefit of the officers in charge, who soon found out how to make their own gain out of the people's loss. But transport they were obliged to hire, and thus paid away all the coin they had received from the foreign contractors. Still, though the money did not remain with them, it enabled them to meet the extraordinary calls made upon them without very great inconvenience, and failing this adventitious aid from foreign gold, they would have been ruined. As no patriotism exists, the people would gladly substitute the sway of so rich a Government for that of their own impoverished and corrupt one. The condition of the poorer classes has undeniably improved since the "Tanzimat" (the New Constitution). Imperfectly carried out as it has been, it has checked that terrible oppression and spoliation under which they so long suffered, and one no longer hears the perpetual complaints which formerly met one's ears. At the same time there is a settled feeling of dissatisfaction growing and increasing in the bosoms of the people against their superiors, a conviction that the country is going to the devil and its resources are being sapped by the venality of the men in power, and that the Osmanli race is on the verge of extinction.

That the Mussulman population is rapidly decreasing I think is certain, and I also believe that within the last few years the Rayahs have been on the increase. Altogether I cannot help entertaining a conviction that many circumstances tend to show that a great revolution must occur in this country, that men's minds are preparing for it, and

that the rush of circumstances is tending to it. What is to come out of it all I leave to wiser heads to surmise; for with the incongruous elements of which Oriental society is composed, and the intense and bitter hatred of races and religions which exists as powerfully as ever, I really do not know what is to be done.

I have made a little excursion in this neighbourhood to Neffes Kioi (the Breezy Village, the ancient Pteria), the site of a Greek city. Great quantities of white marble slabs with Greek inscriptions are exposed by the rains, and are cut up and sent to Yuzgat for fountains and baths. I only saw three built into the walls of the village—Greek—but in several places I noticed the fresh chips where slabs had been recently cut up, and had the very mason with me who had done it. Fragments of columns in polished pudding stone and white marble were abundant. I also saw a large mass of Corinthian frieze in grey stone and some beading. In three places there must have been large temples or theatres. I bought a small female head in white marble and another was taken lately to Constantinople, and I got several brass coins, Roman, Byzantine and Cufic. Excavations would doubtless bring many remains to light. Next day we mounted at 8 A.M. and riding for four hours over a wild mountainous district covered with oak copse and small pines, came through a deep rugged valley to Boghaz Kioi (the Village of the Pass, the ancient Tavium), placed at the mouth of a stream, where the ground opens out into a wide fertile space covered with orchards and cultivation. The village consists of ninety houses, chiefly buried in the hillside, and flat-roofed like all we had seen since leaving Yuzgat. We lodged with Emin Bey, whose ancestors

were lords of the valley. His son Arslan Bey (The Lion), and one of his followers, Hussein Effendi, accompanied me to see the lions of the place. We ascended the hills to the north and reached a natural chamber in one of the cliffs open to the sky. Prominent were two figures of kings meeting, one stood on the back of a lion, the other on the necks of two human figures; both were upright with heads bent forward, and behind followed three small ones, mounted also on lions, probably attendants; these wore pointed caps. The kings wore tiaras resembling those of Khorsabad. There were mystical signs on the tablets, but too effaced to be easily distinguished. There was another large figure holding a tray of symbolical figures, and tablets of small figures in rows; some seemed to be bearing gifts, others carried in their hands short instruments resembling scythes, and all these small figures wore pointed caps. At the back of the chamber were other bas-reliefs, two large female figures wearing the same conical head-dress as the small figures, with tiaras highly ornamented, and one female bore a child in her left arm, while the right was extended as though in supplication. Earth had filled these tablets up above the centre. Opposite them were other rows of the same people portrayed on the first tablets, but better preserved; below I was told that there was a second series of little figures. There were small burying crypts cut into the rock, but I could find no inscriptions whatever; there can be little doubt that these remains are Assyrian.¹ The face of these tablets was covered with a vitreous yellow-brown polish—very hard and thin, and admirably adapted to preserve the raw

¹ Said by some to be Hymaritic, or Hittite.

surface of the sculptured rock. In another direction we were shown the foundations of a singular building, which at first I supposed to have been hewn out of the solid rock, so large were the blocks of which it was composed; but closer inspection showed that this was not the case. Each block was beautifully fitted and locked to the other, especially where the portal seemed to have been the joined edges were carefully polished. The form of the building was oblong, in the middle was a large chamber flanked on one side by a number of small rooms, on the other by a passage; one end was partitioned off and was constructed of huge blocks of granite which I was informed came from the neighbourhood of Kaisariah. It must have cost great labour to have dragged them to their present position over so rough a country. The strength of the building is immense, for the next series of stones were evidently clamped on with iron; the holes to receive the clamps were drilled deep, and frequently into the upper surface of the first series. Could this have been one of the treasure houses? On the hill above was a breastwork of loose stone girding the summit, and in this space were the foundations of houses. This was evidently modern, and Arslan Bey told me that only twenty years ago, when the nomad Koords made forays into the district, the inhabitants of the village used to retire into this fastness with their families and goods and defend themselves against the robbers. There was another castle, they said, on a neighbouring hill, but as the horses were tired, and I supposed it was probably something similar to what I had already seen, I did not visit it. From this castle a vaulted communication extends underground down to the village;

it is said to be sufficiently lofty to admit a horseman. I saw a portion of it, where it had been broken into, midway down the hill. One entrance is in a house in the village, and in winter the smoke from the fires mounts up through the passage and comes out at the hole I saw.

So far I have enjoyed my journey immensely and have no doubt I shall continue to do so. As one of that body so much decried and abused lately, I am fêted as I go along by Turk and Christian; for the eccentric, and to-day unpopular, body of the consuls, is nevertheless very influential and powerful in the East and is made much of. The Vizier dreads his report of mal-administration, and the oppressed look to him to make their grievances known and to get redress for their wrongs.

CAMP TUZGAT, 29th July 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

A few days since I received yours of 22nd June; rather long in coming. Is it not funny that we should have started on our travels on the same day? only while you were surging over the sea in sight of Malta, I was galloping through the woods on my first march from Samsoon. I have not read either of the books as yet, I am treasuring them up for when I shall have long hours on my hands. Between newspapers, visiting, sales, courts of inquiry, and superintending punishment—for I have grown cruel-hearted when necessary, and have the fellows thrown down and bastinadoed before me as quietly as any Turkish Pasha—I have my days filled up; my nights are

passed in bed. I dine, take coffee and tumble in. At four get up, take a cold bath, and at five commence writing despatches, reports, returns, etc., and also private letters, as now to you, by the music of the clattering currycombs with which the Arab grooms are dressing my horses.

After sending you my last letter I started to see the site of an ancient city and some rock sculptures. I left after the auction last Saturday week in the afternoon, and in six hours' riding I got by moonlight to Neffes Kioi, a small Turkish village. As the houses were full of fleas I passed the night outside in the broad light of the moon, without any fear of getting up blind next morning, according to European popular belief. Next morning early I was afoot, trotting through burial-grounds, barley fields, up hills and down ravines, through vineyards and orchards, seeking for relics of the past. Fragments of columns abounded everywhere, and large slabs of marble had been disinterred which, too large to carry away by an ox cart, had been cut up and sent into Yuzgat for fountains and bath stones, and all their inscriptions ruthlessly chipped away. The whole place had been surrounded by fortress and wall. After breakfast I mounted and rode through a wild country, rugged mountains of rock covered with dwarf pines and oak, until I came to a deep ravine with precipitous sides and cliffs of lilac and green-blue colour. This brought me to Boghaz Kioi, placed where the glen debouches into a valley which widened into a small plain. I dismounted at the house of Emin Bey, an old portly gentleman, the representative of a long line of chieftains who had ruled in semi-independence in times of fear over the valley and its neighbourhood. They had just sat down to breakfast, for

with my host were several others; one was the inspector of mosque property from Angora, Riza Effendi; he had been at Paris and London. There were about fifteen dishes in succession, and the address with which I used my fingers elicited great approbation; they were astonished to meet so accomplished a Frank. My education has reached such a point that when my fingers become, by many dippings in various dishes of meat and sweets, very greasy and clammy, I suck them clean again according to custom established, a proceeding which I at first felt some repugnance to, but habit, my dear Mary, accustoms one to many things. I suck, then, my fingers with calm composure and administer the bastinado with hardened indifference, and little by little I dare say, if circumstances required, might attain to cutting off heads. But that I should gain such a climax of Eastern power and manners is neither profitable nor advisable. The meal over, hands washed, and coffee drunk with becoming gravity, I mounted again, and under escort of the heir apparent, Arslan Bey, or the Lion chief, Hussein Effendi, the secretary, and the headman of the village, clambered up from the valley to where a pinnacle of rock jutted out from the sharp slope of the mountain, and here I found a natural chamber with very curious bas-reliefs.

I came back late in the afternoon, dined after sun-down, mounted at ten o'clock by moonlight, and passing over mountain and down valleys, through oak copse and pine wood, at two in the morning halted at a little village. Here I threw myself on a bench, as I did not wish to enter Yuzgat too early and rouse all the good people up before dawn. I slept for two hours without unbelting sword or pistol or moving a spur, and at four got into the

saddle, rode sharp, reached Yuzgat at half-past five, took a bath, and was all ready for business again, having made my trip without stealing any time from what I owed to Government.

There have been two travellers here lodging in the same house and supposed to be my guests, as my host considers the house and all that is in it to be mine so long as I please to honour it with my presence. One was a very nice fellow, a Roman, travelling under a passport from Lord Stratford. His name is Montesi, and he was a companion of Mansfield Parkyns in his travels in Abyssinia, Sennaar, etc., and gave me many interesting accounts of what he saw and experienced in those countries.

The other day I called on the Pasha, and talking of various things, he told me that by their laws if a woman interfered between two combatants they were bound to desist; also that it was lawful to tell a lie to make peace between husband and wife—in all other matters of course it was wrong, with the exception of lying to an enemy, which H. E. declared to be a meritorious act permitted by all religions. Next day I rode out to see the stone of Kainardgi, a huge block of grey granite poised upon two small stones on the top of rocks. On my return Delli Ameer's two wives came to petition me to get him out of prison, which I promised to do, and got my feet kissed in return. In the afternoon I inspected the camels, and as sales are slackening shall go on my journey.

Evening. I have just returned from my visits. Two mounted orderlies, two mounted cavasses, two native majors, four native captains, myself, accountant, in uniform of Captain Land Transport Corps, Lieutenant Brooks, in

command of escort, Dr Rimmir, uniform medical staff; Mr Prior, clerk; Mr Costandi, interpreter; mounted English escort, twenty-four armed running footmen. So I came and so I went, the admiration of all beholders. On my road I shall be met by the chief of the mounted district patrols, and by him escorted into Kaisariah. As the roads are growing more dangerous I shall keep my party closer together, not that I care a button, but on account of my responsibility as chief of the expedition. We muster two hundred armed men. My next from Kaisariah.

KAISARIAH, 6th August 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

From Yuzgat we passed over brown undulating ground to the village of Yuniss Hissar, a collection of miserable huts, and continuing over similar country we reached Boghazleeen, a village of 300 houses in the midst of cornlands, where we encamped on the banks of a muddy river. Next day we ascended a line of hills and came through a long narrow ravine to the bridge over the Kizil Irmak (the Red River),¹ with fourteen arches, and then we rounded the shoulder of a cliff by a narrow path overhanging the stream and entered a rocky gorge. On both sides of the river we saw numerous flocks of

¹ The ancient Halys, the greatest river of Asia Minor, rising in the Anti-Taurus range on the borders of Armenia Minor and Pontus, it falls into the Black Sea between Sinope and Samsoon. It separated the Lydian empire from the Medo-Persian, until, by marching over it to meet Cyrus, Croesus began the contest which ended in the overthrow of the former and the extension of the latter to the Ægean Sea.

sheep which in autumn are driven down into Syria as far as Damascus. Here we also found a Koordish encampment of black tents. Leaving the Kizil Irmak we crossed the hills to another deep pass, below in the bottom was cultivation and at the head of the gorge, climbing up its steep slopes, were the cottages and orchards of Emmiler. Ascending we came upon a corn plateau, which took us to Erkelet, and here a sudden and precipitous fall in the ground occurs, forming the large basin which is the plain of Kaisariah. Erkelet is a large Turkish village scattered down the broken precipice, houses and orchards all commingled—the roof of one dwelling frequently forms the courtyard of the one above it, and over the whole hang suspended huge masses of impending and detached rock. Thence one hour's march over the plain, and across the causeway and bridge of the sluggish and marshy stream of the Sarimsakly Su (Garlic River) brought us to Kaisariah, one of the finest towns of Anatolia, having a large trade and constant communication with the Mediterranean by way of Tarsus and Smyrna, and with the Black Sea through Samsoon. It is therefore a great centre of commerce, and is surrounded by rich convents and wealthy villages. Herds of cattle are driven here every autumn from Erzeroum and Adana to be converted into jerked beef for Constantinople.

I arrived on the 2nd in great state. The Pasha of Yuzgat had given me six or eight mounted Zabtiyéh, and before reaching Erkelet I was met by Khalil Agha and fifty of his Irregular Horse, who took up the escort. The meeting was very pretty; turning a corner of the road on the hillside opposite was a body of horsemen—query friend or foe? Our party gathered into a knot

and speculated whether this was Khalil Agha or not, for we had expected to meet him only one stage from Kaisariah. One of my horsemen threw out to the left, a second followed to the right and they began to play their animals, wheeling and circling. For a few seconds the opposite party remained steady, then a horseman dashed out, quivering his lance, then another swept along with levelled gun. The play had been answered, and friends were recognised; had they been enemies they would not have replied; for there is chivalry even amongst the wild robbers of the plain. Then with a hurrah all shot forward and commingled at a gallop, shots were fired, swords drawn, horseman pursued horseman, jereeds were hurled hissing through the air. I, of course, pursued my way unmoved at an amble, and then the whole party ranged in line, their commander came forward, and I made my salaam as I passed along their front. The kettle drums were beaten before me, the men fell in, and so I reached my first stage. Next day at the first march, when I stopped for breakfast, another commander joined me with his men, so our entry was very grand into Kaisariah. Three pairs of kettle drums, the insignia of a Pasha, were beating before me, the horsemen were ranged in two long lines in front, and the English escort in the rear. I was met by Baghut, his three camel Yuzbashi and their men, with more camels for sale. They joined in, Arabs and Turks vying with one another in feats of horsemanship. The officers sent out by the Kaimakam (Lieut.-Governor) missed me, but the Tufenkgees (musketeers) of the town escorted me through the long ranges of bazaars until I reached my house. I was quite surprised at their great extent—all covered in. They reminded me of

Cairo; the same Eastern half lights, and the same heavy smell of drugs pervaded them. Each trade was by itself—saddlers, copper and iron workers, blacksmiths, manufacturers, etc.—like in Constantinople. I have revisited Kaisariah with pleasurable feelings. Some twelve years ago I left it without a single prospect before me, and I return with the pomp and circumstance of an Eastern Pasha; the difference between the little party which left, and the stately cavalcade of to-day, is great. I was welcomed by the American missionaries, Messrs Farnsworth and Ball, who took me out to their house in the gardens at the foot of the noble mountain of Ergêz (Argæus).¹ The grand old fellow rears himself up, summit upon summit, spreading his base far and wide, and from this mass of eminences upshoot twin cones, silvered with eternal snows, their white peaks gleaming in sharp line against the brilliant sky above them.

The missionaries were married, and Mrs Farnsworth in especial was disposed to do all in her power to welcome me. But it was very inconvenient, as I am accustomed to commence work at five in the morning and write my reports, accounts and letters before the auction at nine. So I took up my quarters by myself in their town house, and so I could see much more of the country and ride out to the villages and monasteries two or three hours round about, where everybody was only too happy to have my company to dinner and to give me a bed for the night. In this way I passed my time very agreeably and have seen everything remarkable in the neighbourhood. I have sold off my convoys of horses and mules and the Turkman

¹ An extinct volcano, described by Strabo as emitting flames and smoke from its base.

camels, and have only 2000 or so Arab camels, the mules and horses requisite for them and for ourselves, about 250. The camels I have started in advance and shall follow myself on the 18th to Adana, thence—Inshallah—to Aleppo.

I went out to the kiosk of the principal Agha here, Haggi Mehmet Agha. It was a splendid place; a broad flight of steps conducted us to a vast saloon, in the centre was a skylight dome, on one side a dais, railed off by a low balustrade which supported divans raised on a step. In the middle between the divans was a marble fountain of three basins and seventeen jets, from which the water ran off, by a shallow marble channel, to a huge tank on a turf lawn backed by vine trellises, and shaded by gigantic pear trees laden with fruit, and apricot trees whose golden balls looked pretty amongst the thick leaves. Standing in the lower basin were tables bearing bowls filled with pears, apples, apricots, and red and white plums, and over them plashed unceasingly the water's spray. When handed round, the diamond drops which glittered on their surfaces were beautiful. The kiosk opened into three large rooms; on one side of the main apartment was a long divan, sitting on which we looked down upon a terrace some way below—a forest of fruit trees. Ali Dagħ rose in a sharp double cone to the right—on it I had many and many times brought down the whirring red partridges. Almost in front, a little to the left, were the snowy peaks of Ergēêz; the moon rose softly on the whole, and the "Arabian Nights" were realised. Brooks and the doctor whom I took with me were delighted; they had never dreamed of such scenes in Turkey, and the three English soldiers of my escort were treated to

coffee, a capital dinner, and even to two glasses of racky apiece, and had a handsome room, soft divans, and comfortable beds, and I daresay would have liked to have stopped there all their lives. On my way out we called at the house of one of the Aghas in a village called Thalass, a place containing about a thousand houses built of hewn stone, with windows on the streets, and lots of pretty faces at the doors. It is built hanging amidst impending crags, which rear themselves like a wall from the plain. On ascending there were breaks in the streets, where one gazed down the precipice; straight below were the roofs of the houses of the streets through which we had passed, and beyond a glorious sweep of broad plain.

At the house of this Agha I met Tcherkess Bey, who had just arrived from his tents in the Kozan Dagħ to pay his respects and to arrange about my escort. He is the chief of the great horde of Avshars,¹ the wildest and most murderous of the nomad tribes. He was a fine old fellow, with a handsome countenance, straight nose, soft, clever eyes, grey beard, and a quiet gentlemanly air—about the last man one would have picked out as a robber chieftain. On my return next day he called upon me in the morning, but as I had already left for the auction he returned in the afternoon, and hearing that I was ill with one of my headaches came again next day early. I returned his visit in the afternoon, when he at once went back to the cool air of his mountains. Our party have already found out the advantage of having a Consul as the head of the expedition. Everyone vies to receive me

¹ Descendants of the original Turkish hordes who, coming from Central Asia, invaded Asia Minor long before the advent of the Seljouks.

well, hoping to be favourably mentioned at Constantinople. On the 11th, which was Koorban Bairam (the Great Feast), I rode out to Ghermir and saw many grottoes used as habitations in the rocks. I called upon the wife of Haralambo Saraff and went over his fine house. The new houses building by the Christians, whether in town or in the villages, are sufficient evidence of their prosperity. Next day after the auction I rode out to Yanar Tash (the Burning Stone) passing by Ghermir and under Girlaook, a large Mohammedan village; leaving Tavlassoon on the left in the valley and crossing a rough mountainous district I came to the village of Bellassy, tenanted by Armenians. Close by was the Armenian monastery of Sur Karabet, and round the shoulder of the hill was the village of Efkerä. In the monastery are many relics, amongst them the arm, finger, knee and three rib-bones of St John the Baptist. This draws many devotees from distant parts, and lately the one hundred guest-rooms were insufficient to accommodate the visitors, who even slept in the road. The monastery is built on the precipitous side of a mountain, and beneath it are fine orchards; it commands an extensive view of the plain. Half an hour further on we passed through the village of Tarsiak and dismounted at the Greek convent of St Michael and St George; close by is the village of Nirzi.

No one recognises me here, and I am not surprised. I left as a fair lad, with hardly a hair on my lip, now I am bronzed with a sweeping moustache, and a beard which has commenced to curl round my chin—what you would call a fright! With my long Arab cloak on, my Consul's cap, long boots, spurs and sabre, I must be rather a peculiar figure. I am well and strong, nerved to fatigue,

but thin. As I go along I reduce the circumference of sword and revolver belts, and yet, you know, my girth was never very great. The perpetual exercise and work, leaves little but bone and sinew on my frame.

KAISARIAH, 12th August 1856.

MY DEAR LAYARD,

I wrote to you from Yuzgat and received your letter of 26th June a few days ago. What you say about the "Hat al-Humayoun" is correct. In the villages the people are glad of anything which offers a change to the present system, but in the towns it has raised a fierce spirit of bigoted hatred against the Christians. I am everywhere told that during the war the Mohammedans were much subdued and behaved better to the Rayahs, but that now their old intolerance has revived. This is mainly owing to the resentment caused by the publication of the "Hat," but not entirely. The fact is that while the war lasted the Turks were under the impression that we intended to seize the country, and the moment they heard that the occupation was to cease, they lifted up their heads and began to talk of "ghiaours" (infidels). It is a bad race and I fear little is to be done with them. The planting of consuls as a check upon the governors, the establishment of European merchants, the opening of communications with the consequent increase of commerce and intercourse, seem the only chance left of real reformation. The Christians are, however, undoubtedly increasing in prosperity, and are getting very impatient of the yoke

which has so long and so grievously lain upon their necks ; but they can never form a governing race. The only chance would be to make two European Princes, one for Roumelia and all the Danubian Provinces, the other for Anatolia ; supported in the commencement by European troops, until such a time as native Christian troops could be raised and trained, and a large stream of colonisation should have flowed into the country. I see no other way of building these countries into rich and powerful barriers against Russia.

The Rayahs are very anxious for the re-establishment of our consulate at Kaisariah. They say that while Mr Henry Suter was here the Mussulmans did not dare to illtreat them, but now that he is gone things are altered. As to the project of throwing away our capitulations and submitting ourselves to Turkish law, it would be insanity. It would be equal to ordering every Frank to quit the country. The time has not yet come when the Turks can be safely entrusted with such powers over Europeans. It is the perpetual friction of Franks against them which alone can keep them moving on.

Curiously enough the Christians have wit enough to understand that the conscription would have led to their obtaining political power in the country, and are anything but pleased that a commutation tax should have been settled upon in lieu of actual levies. They say this is a mere renewal of the "Haradj" (poll tax)—another name—and so it is, although I should have supposed that they would rather have paid the "Haradj" twice over than have given their children to the army. Perhaps had conscription been imposed they would have been equally dissatisfied.

My progress through the country has been quite a triumphant procession, Turk and Christian are equally anxious to be civil to the Consul—that great name throughout the East. I had an escort from Yuzgat which with my own men, would have enabled me to carry the town by storm had I been so inclined.

Kaisariah is a fine city, certainly the second in importance in Anatolia—giving Smyrna the first rank. Its bazaars are very extensive, well tenanted and well stocked, particularly with Manchester goods. The villages are splendid, built of hewn stone and containing each five hundred to eleven hundred houses: there are four principal ones, the abode of wealthy merchants, and in both towns and villages the Christians are building new houses, and the wealth and trade of the country are in their hands. It is an enterprising race, but not noted for honesty; a clever merchant in the East may be put down as a rogue, as a matter of course. A change for the better has taken place since I was here fourteen years ago; commerce is increasing and the Mohammedans, though still dangerous, are not so bad as they were then.

I have found a deep sense of disappointment prevailing amongst the Rayahs. They had hoped and believed that England and France would have taken measures to ensure their being placed on an equal footing with the Mohammedans, and that the Turks would have been prevented from harassing and insulting them. The contrary has been the case; and in the bitterness of their hearts they have ceased to pray for the sovereigns of England and France, and they look for relief to Russia.

While the war lasted and the Turks and the Rayahs were both under the impression that the country would

be occupied by European troops, the leading Aghas began to pay their debts to the Christians, and abusive epithets were discontinued. But when it was known that the Allies were entirely quitting the East, the Mohammedans lifted up their heads, refused to settle the accounts they owed, and resumed their old hostility towards the Christians. I will tell you of a few instances which have come to my knowledge, and which justify the complaints of the Christians. At Fenessy, near Everek, in this district, the Armenian burying-ground was so situated that the dead had to be carried past the Mussulman quarter, such indignities were heaped upon the mourners that the Armenian community purchased another piece of land contiguous to their own quarter. Four deaths occurred in six months, and the bodies were quietly interred. Islamoglu Mahmood Agha, whose house was on the opposite side of the valley, desired the Christians to remove their dead, as the sight of them was disgusting to him. They said that neither by law nor in decency could this be done, but that they would bury their dead elsewhere in future. He had the corpses dug up and thrown out on to the high road.

At Tavlasoon, only one hour's ride from here, an Agha desired an Armenian, named Murady, to give him a gun belonging to him. The Christian agreed to do so on payment of 150 piastres, which it had cost. This did not suit the Agha and, together with his kinsmen, by beat of drum he assembled a mob of two or three hundred men, levelled the walls of the Christian's orchard, cut down and carried away the trees, and utterly ruined the poor man's property.

About the same time, also in this vicinity, a Moham-

medan got into trouble because his donkey did damage to a convent garden. He resolved to revenge himself on the first Christian he met—a respectable Greek on horseback, with his wife behind him. The Turk hit the horse over the head with a stick, and it reared, he then struck the rider and felled him to the ground, his wife falling with him. He repeated the blow, inflicting a frightful gash; the wife threw herself upon her husband's body to screen him, and the Turk beat her to death. Some men working in the fields ran up and found the woman, who was five months with child, dead, and the man senseless with his head laid open in two places. They followed the murderer to a village and secured him, and he is now in prison; but he affects to be mad, and because he is a Mussulman and the murdered are only "ghiaours" (infidels) it is convenient to take this view of the case, and probably nothing will be done.

Water being scarce and of great value, the Christians are arbitrarily deprived of what belongs to them by right, either for the use of their houses or for irrigation. A reservoir which a Greek had made at Tavlassoon was torn down; and the supply of water belonging to the house in which I am now, which was purchased not long ago and for which the "hodgets" (title-deeds) are in order, has been cut off and no redress can be obtained. What the Christians say is true, where there is no Consul to control the local authorities they can get no justice. It is only the constant supervision of Consuls which will ever make things go right in this country. At present if a complaint be made through the Patriarchates at Constantinople, the Porte refers it back to the Valy; the Valy refers to the council, and the Aghas of the

council give the case the colour they choose, the Christians are nonsuited, and there ends the matter.

In the new companies registered in January last I see amongst others the Euphrates railway, with a capital of £1,000,000. Is this seriously contemplated? If so what a change will be wrought; branch railways and roads would at once be made to join the main line, and an enormous trade would be opened. Turkey would be worth living in. Next Monday I leave this for Adana, and Aleppo, and next spring—Inshallah—I shall go to England, and then at last I hope to see you again.

[In his dispatches, or reports, to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, Mr Ross dwells particularly on the good feeling which everywhere prevailed towards the English. The treatment of the different bodies of men who had been in our service, militia, Bashi Bozook, and Land Transport Corps, had excited the highest admiration and strong feelings of gratitude; our kindness and justice, our care of the wounded and sick, and the regularity with which the men had been paid, were highly extolled. Such reports had been spread of the great British Queen that the one desire of the people was to pass under her rule. A rumour had preceded Mr Ross that he was sent to enroll volunteers for service in India (during the Mutiny), and he could have obtained any number of men, although they would have had to fight against their own co-religionists. When at Neffes Kioi, Emin Bey was anxious to know if it were true that the Sultan had made a present to the Queen of England of a large extent of almost deserted country on the coast of the Mediterranean. Mr Ross told him it could not be, as he would have known of it; adding, that he quite understood that, as Mohammedans, the people would not like to see Christians, especially Europeans, settling amongst them. Emin Bey's reply

was — “On the contrary, we should be glad. The Government of the Sultan has never done anything for us, it does not even protect our crops from being devoured and down-trodden by the herds of the nomad tribes. We have no roads to transport our grain and our sheep’s wool to the sea-coast. If the English came they would protect us from the tribes and construct roads, and we should live in peace and prosperity. Let the English Queen send troops armed only with little sticks, and the whole country is hers.”]

ADANA, 25th August 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

I left Kaisariah on the 17th late in the afternoon, marching out just two hours to the great marsh—four hours long—such a place it must be for wild fowl in winter! It drains into the Kairsu, a tributary of the Kizil Irmak. We encamped on the borders of the marsh, and next day left at half-past two A.M., and crossed a promontory jutting out into the Sazlik (marsh), by a rocky bad road, over alternate hills and flats till we reached Injeh Su (the Narrow River), six hours from Kaisariah, placed in a ravine which is barred across by a wall. There is a curious mosque and a fine khan in ruins. Leaving this we crossed a wide plain having Ergêz on our right, where the snow still held on the southern face, but in small quantities. A’ala Dagh (the Lofty Mountain) was in front also streaked with snow, it is a great mass of mountain, wooded and tenanted by elk (?), red deer and roe, boars, etc. We passed through the village of Devely Kara-hissar (Black Castle of the Camels), a wretched place

of five hundred hovels, and encamped on the side of some gardens half an hour beyond, under the castle of Zergeeban. The only interesting incident which occurred was just before entering the village, when a Mussulman girl stepped out of an orchard and asked which was the English Pasha? I was pointed out and she offered me a handkerchief full of grapes, "in testimony of our gratitude that you have saved us from being trodden upon by those dogs the Russians." She was a pretty girl about seventeen, very modest in her manner although she did not hide her face. I had great difficulty in getting her to accept a piece of money in return for her present, and the incident quite touched me; whether I should have been equally so had the actor been a man, or a girl less pretty, I don't know. Through all that region were spread the soldiers of the contingent, and they had extolled everywhere the greatness and the generosity of the English. Next morning I struck camp at one A.M. and rode over the plain to Eneyil, which we reached at six with fingers numbed by the cold; a rough monumental column stood close to the village, which was a miserable one, and a neat Greek church lay in ruins; it was built ten years ago and suddenly fell in about four years since. Ergēēz Dagħ was behind us, snow on even his southern face; immediately over us on the south rose the A'ala Dagħ, a culminating point of the Taurus, in precipitous peaks covered with snow wherever it could lie on its sharp cliffs, a beautiful mountain extending as far as the eye could reach. From out of the masses of A'ala Dagħ sharp precipices reared themselves in clear outlines, and snow lay thick in ravine and crevice. On the lower pastures between Eneyil and Piyan Deresy were encamp-

ments of Yuruks, another Turkish tribe, nomads of the plains around Adana. They were a square-built, fine race of men, well clothed in woollen garments, well armed, and with strong active horses under them; the mountain sides were covered with their droves of camels, cattle, sheep and mares.

After eight hours we reached the small town of Bereketlü Madem (the Bountiful Mine), nestled amongst red hills at the top of the pass; its orchards ran creeping up the ravines, through which trickled rills which, joining together, formed a trout stream. Bereketlü Madem is a smelting spot for argentiferous lead ore found six hours' distance higher up, close under the terminating peaks of A'ala Dag, but the mines can only be worked during three months of the year on account of the snow. I was well received by the Bey, who carried me off to his house, where I was visited by Ali Bey, chief of the powerful tribe of the Melemenlee Turkmans. He was very anxious that I should take coffee at his tents, an hour and a half further on, next day when I resumed my march, but as I was to start at midnight I was obliged to decline.

The following morning we commenced the descent of the long passes of the Taurus, leading to the hot plains of Arabistan. Up to Bereketlü Madem all the streams flowed to the Euxine; the little brook whose course we now followed ran to the Mediterranean. At midnight we started by the light of a full moon, and for three hours our path was bounded by high rocks and tall precipices, scantily furnished with dwarf terebinth. War had set its mark here. Where the valley contracted a battery had been thrown up across the road, and redoubts crowned the highest peaks on either side, erected by the

Turks to check Ibrahim Pasha (the famous son of Mohammed Ali Pasha, of Egypt) should he advance towards Asia Minor. Our little friend the trout brook received numerous contributions from the small rills which dashed down the ravines; his volume increased, and he frayed his way quickly and noisily over the large boulders which stood in his path. Pines, terebinths, and *lignum vitæ* increased in number and in size, and finally the great mountains were clothed in a continuous sheet of forest. Miles and miles does that forest reach. Only one other shrub grows in it, with a leaf like a pear and an odd-looking fruit, which I don't know, and some junipers. Here and there a steep hillside denuded of soil, sloped in barren ledges of grey rock, just enough to break the monotony of the trees. All down the gorge, at short distances, were placed khans of refuge, as the snows are very dangerous in winter, and about them were small fields. Some miles further on the river suddenly disappeared into a hole at the base of the high chain which formed the east side of the valley, and is said to surge up again in four hours as the Bozante Su. Immediately where the river thus dives into the bowels of the mountain, the acute crest of the lofty ridge is sharply cut into, as if for a road, but if so, it must have been in ancient times, as no one ever goes near the place now. The woods increased in denseness and the mountains took a more savage appearance as we began a long descent on a rough rocky road, occasionally very steep. During our march we overtook the camels, and it was a magnificent sight, amongst those wild scenes, to view 2000 of them, mingled with long lines of mules and many horsemen, trundling down the passes. Through such a

country we marched ten hours, and at last reached the valley of the Bozante Su, and encamped on the brink of the river (a tributary of the Sihun)—our former friend grown into a respectable stream after diving under a great mountain. I took my gun and strolled up the hill-sides. The view looking down was beautiful; two valleys joined and formed one, in which were our camps; that of the camels was very large, the tents green and white with the animals gathered round, while others were still coming down the mountain's sides. I only saw one hare, and missed it. The next morning we started before daylight, and, leaving the river, after three hours' ride reached the mouth of the defile of Kulek Boghaz (the Bucket Gorge, so-called from its abysmal depth, the ancient Cilician Gates). We dismounted and waited for the sun, when we found strong redoubts on either side of the road flanked and commanded by batteries, in which dismounted iron guns still remain, half-buried in weeds and rubbish, at different elevations on the snowy heights. They were carefully and scientifically built, and surpassed in strength the Malakoff and the Redan. Ibrahim Pasha had raised them against the Turks. Hence we dived down into a deep chasm—a perfect well, hence its name the Bucket Gorge—walled in by huge grey precipices, crowned with pines, which were hanging over us wherever a rent in the cliffs allowed a root to hold. Such places for ibex to breed—at Akhan in the deep ravine we saw two glorious pairs of horns. On one of these cliffs were the remains of an ancient castle attributed by the natives to the Genoese, as is everything in this country prior to the Mohammedan era. I enjoyed it immensely—such savage grandeur all around.

Stones rolled from above would have destroyed an army, and through such a place had Ibrahim Pasha dragged the long iron guns which we found half-buried in his batteries, and those fools the Turks had left the passage undefended, and given him time to construct a military road—such as it is: it dragged the shoes off our horses' feet. Through the defile we rode for three hours, and then the country opened, and below us were the lower mountains, a sea of huge undulating waves covered with forest. Here vegetation began to change. There were all the Samssoon trees, interspersed with pines and terebinths, bays, wild olive and fig, mountain ash with scarlet berries, clematis and wild vine clustered thickly everywhere, oleander and the lavender-coloured agnes casta occupied the water courses, luxurious myrtle in full bloom and odour formed an undergrowth, and walls of cliff occasionally lifted themselves to bear crowns of pines on their brows. Here and there huge monoliths, which had fallen from the upper precipices stood upright—natural obelisks. Strange ruins we passed in these untenanted spots—fanés of the early Christians and Mussulmans. As we went lower down we came to fields of sesame, and on concluding a long march of fourteen hours, at Minaré Khan, a ruined mosque and khan, we encamped on our old friend the Bozante Su, now grown into a river 15 feet wide, amidst sesame, cotton, millet and melon fields. The plain was covered with the desert thorn of Mesopotamia, with its kidney-shaped fruit. We passed at once from the cold uplands of Anatolia to the hot plains of Arabistan.

On August 22 we halted for the day, the animals having had a severe trial over the very bad roads. I went out with my gun, sprang two francolins, a hare, and a

quail, and missed them all. Next morning we left at two a.m., crossed a sedgy valley, and then went by the valley of the Bozante for about four hours, moving pretty nearly east. We then turned into the hills covered with a pretty copse, and I even remarked a few pines, and also the mountain ash, which I had seen in abundance in the upper mountains. The rocks were of pebbly concrete, as though the whole had been under water. A very common shrub was the Hab al-Az, a very prickly plant with brown olive-shaped berries. The whole of this district is under the chief of the Menemeleh Turkmans, an orderly and very numerous tribe.

Adana is built of small bricks cemented with mud, and has a ruinous aspect, but much in it calls to mind Baghdad and Mosul, and therefore I like it; on the flat roofs were raised bedsteads surrounded by muslin to preserve the inhabitants from the assaults of a small fly, and I see all the town go to bed and get up again. Many of the inhabitants, however, are away on the elevated plateaux to escape the heat, which is excessive. A few date trees grow here, but the fruit rarely attains maturity. I visited the escort at a caravan near the bridge over the Sihun, here called the Zamante, (the ancient Sarus), which rises in the Kozan Dag; its breadth at full water must be two hundred yards. It is pretty to hear the doves cooing all over the roofs, where no one molests them, and amongst the date palms they recall Egypt; they are different from the European turtle dove, and also from the small vinus-coloured species of Egypt. A lot more camels have arrived, and tomorrow I commence sales. Great brakes of cane separate the gardens here; I saw bamiahs (okras) and patlingians (egg plants), pumpkins and melons, oranges and lemons (fine

large trees), pomegranates, figs, grapes and peaches, and large fields of sugar cane. The water is raised by Persian water wheels turned by the force of the current of the Zamante, which flows past the town in a broad and deep stream. The whole country is covered with sedge and cane growing up amidst grain and cotton, mixed with desert thorn, castor oil plants, wild fig, and reedy grass. The botu tree, a species of small pistachio, grows to a large size, with dark green foliage; it is the tree which affords the sakig gum or mastic; on breaking a twig an adhesive juice exudes of a milky appearance, and the fruit is borne in drooping clusters or racemes. The mimosa is another tree which here is first seen.

We are on the sites of Greek colonies, and beneath us the soil teems with their remains; columns, capitals and friezes are everywhere dug up, they are built into the walls and appear amidst the pavements. It is a great game country, gazelles, boar, hares, francolin and red partridges in abundance. I intend to try my luck, for I shall not have much to do as the Turkman tribes are all in their summer pastures; had they been in these plains my camels would all have been sold. We are about to go through a very dangerous pass, that of Karanluk Boghaz (the Defile of Darkness) under the Ghiaour Dag (Mountain of the Infidel) at the bottom of the gulf of Iscanderoon (Alexandretta). For three months no caravan has been able to pass, and the Government post has been robbed. Ibrahim Pasha in attempting to reduce the inhabitants of this region lost 4000 men, and then had to pay blackmail to get through. The Turkish Government also paid blackmail to the chiefs until three months ago, when the payments were discontinued for

some reason or other, and in consequence they stopped the Government post, and paid themselves from the specie it contained. Ever since the road has been closed to all passers-by.

I have just returned from a visit to Tarsoos, on the Tersoon Chai (the ancient Cydnus). I left at midnight yesterday, and got there in five hours and a half: it is a small town with two streams flowing through it. We entered through a high gateway, seemingly of Roman construction, and the whole place is full of ancient remains. One large oblong construction with immensely massive walls is very peculiar; in its hollow centre at either end are square masses of rubble masonry of great size and quite solid, what for (unless as bases for huge statues) it is impossible to surmise. Next morning I left at one A.M. and returned to Adana. Within an hour's distance from the town I observed the line of an ancient canal, and suspect that we passed others nearer Tarsoos, but in the dark it was impossible to distinguish with certainty.

I was glad to be amongst orange groves and sugar-canes again, and the great cane brakes and the riotous vegetation are quite tropical. The country abounds in game, but I have no dogs, and no horses fit for such work, or I would renew my gallops after the pigs and try what I could do with my sword instead of a lance. My blood would thrill again to be at racing pace behind a good pair of tusks. I leave to-morrow at three in the morning; our first march of six hours will be very fine as great mountains come down to the gulf of Iscanderoun. The road runs along the edge of the sea under these mountains, and this is the point of danger. Some eighty

persons are going through under my protection; they have been waiting for an opportunity for weeks. I shall marshal my little army, now diminished to 350, and go prepared for a tussle if requisite. I shall also have guards from the Pasha. You shall hear how we get through. Inshallah! I doubt our having any adventures. Consuls are far too big men to be meddled with.

ISCANDEROON, 2nd September 1856.

DEAR MARY,

I came safe through the "Defile of Darkness" yesterday with a strong escort besides 350 of my own men, and our line of march extended over three miles. The country is very pretty. Ghiaour Dagh, a chain of lofty mountains, in whose fastnesses from time immemorial have lived robber tribes in a state of independence—both Mahommedans and Christians—extends to this place. A flat, frequently a sheet of morass, exists betwixt the mountains and the sea, with high canes and sedge, amongst which grows a beautiful lilac convolvulus with great bells; elsewhere it is a shrubbery of dates, arbutus, oleander, prickly ilex, pomegranate, olive, mountain ash, agnes casta, carub, myrtle, etc.

On leaving Adana we crossed a stone bridge with fourteen arches over the Sihun, where were the only floating flour mills I have seen in Asiatic Turkey, and high Persian wheels raising water for irrigation. The river is navigable for small cargo boats; they come across from Cyprus with wine, soap, etc., and return with corn, which is grown in abundance. We crossed a wide plain

and reached Missis (the ancient Mopsuesta), where was a military post, on the 30th August. It is situated on the Jihun (the ancient Pyramus), a large river which rises near Marash, and which we crossed by a fine bridge of nine arches. On the way I saw a wild boar and gazelles. The road lay over a great plain, quite uncultivated; all the soil cracked and split, and quite rotten under our horses' feet. Missis has been a large Turkish town built out of the remains of the old Greek city; columns and portions of friezes are scattered over the whole country. Passing over the bridge next morning we saw big turtle floating down to the sea after laying their eggs in the sandbanks,¹ and then following the opposite bank and going up stream for some distance we turned the spur of Noor Dagħ (Mountain of Light) and crossed Ildjeh Bel (the Tepid Ridge). At this point we left the Jihun, and as we descended into the plain of Tchukoor Ova (Hollow Plain), we had within a mile on the north the remarkable castle of Shah Miran (the Sultan of Snakes), who is supposed to receive his subjects, the serpents, once a year there, and about whom and his friend, the great sage Lokman,² many tales

¹ The turtle are the Green which extend all the way down the coast to Egypt, not the Hawkbill.

² Among Orientals the wisdom of Lokman is proverbial. In the notes to Lane's translation of the "Arabian Nights" we find: "The country and age of this famous person are unknown. He is generally described as an ugly black slave, and said to have lived in the time of David; though some assert that he was the son of a sister, or of a maternal aunt, of Job. Some suppose him to be Æsop."

M. J. J. Marcel, who translated the fables of Lokman in 1799, and published them at Cairo, says: "The most generally received opinion is that Lokman and Æsop are one and the same person; the Greeks, not knowing his real name, called him Æsop, Αἰσωπος, which is simply the word Αἰθιωψ, Αἰθιωπος, Ethiopian, with a letter changed, as often happens in dialects.

are told. It stands on an isolated rock rising from the plain like an island out of the sea, and the culminating point is a high, steep crest covered by round towers connected by a curtain wall. In the distance was another castle on a low hill called Üshük, and further away was, what must be the finest of all by the description given me, the large fortress of Anazarbus.¹ To the north-east was

Lokman was a *Habechy*, that is an Abyssinian or Ethiopian slave, and the same stories are told by Oriental writers about him as were afterwards related about Æsop. . . . Lokman, a thick-lipped, woolly-haired black, was sold to a Jewish master during the reign of David or of Solomon, and became a shepherd. Thus he had full leisure for meditation, and having received from God, as set forth by Eastern chroniclers, the gift of wisdom, composed his apologues and parables, and his proverbs, which are said to have numbered ten thousand. Tefseyr el-Fourquan, author of a commentary on the Koran, gives the following account of how God bestowed wisdom on Lokman: 'One day, during the midday repose, invisible angels greeted Lokman, who seeing no one, remained silent. So the angels said unto him: We are sent by God, thy Creator and ours, to offer the authority and empire over the whole earth. Lokman made reply: If God commands me to accept such power, His will be done, and I trust He will, at the same time, give unto me strength to execute His orders faithfully; but if I am permitted to choose, I prefer my present condition of slavery, in which I can preserve my honesty and innocence, to so exalted a position, where I might be tempted to forget them.' This reply, adds the chronicler, was so pleasing to God that He bestowed the gift of wisdom on Lokman, who made use of it to instruct all mankind. . . . The XXXI. chapter of the Koran is called *Sourat Lokman* (chapter of Lokman), and Mohammed makes use of his name and authority in a way that shows how great his reputation was among the Arabs at that time. . . ."

See "Fables de Loqman, surnommé le Sage. Edition Arabe, accompagnée d'une traduction Française, et précédé d'une Notice sur ce célèbre Fabuliste." Au Kaire, de l'Imprimerie Nationale an VIII. de la République Française (1799 vieux style).

¹ Once the capital of Cilicia Secunda, the town was almost destroyed by earthquakes in the time of Justinian and Justin.

Kozan Dagħ, tenanted by the ferocious Turkish tribes of the Avshars, who devastate the plains of Kaisariah and Sivas, while to the east rose the great mass of Ghiaour Dagħ, the stronghold of Turkman and Armenian robber tribes.

From time immemorial these wild clans have maintained their independence. Authority is divided amongst several Beys who war upon each other, and the strongest keeps possession of the land. By popular account, a man to obtain a virgin in marriage must have proved his courage by taking seven lives. These people render the whole country dangerous from Koort Koolak (Wolf's Ear) to Iscanderoon, and thence by the Beilan pass to Aleppo. Descending the Ilidjeh Bel we passed a military post of seventy horsemen, and entered the fine plain of Tchukoor Ova celebrated for its breed of horses; they have a dash of Arab blood and are of good size, wide-chested, active beasts—well suited for the native irregular cavalry. Tchukoor Ova is a wilderness, the vegetation is so tall and matted that in spring, fallow deer, unable to force their way through the rank herbage, are ridden down and taken by hand. A short distance from the road was another post of fifty horsemen. These men are all Turkmen clansmen, furnished by the Beys to whom the Porte makes an allowance for escorting the post.

Leaving the plain we ascended another ridge and encamped at Koort Koolak, a fortified enclosure containing a Khan and a Kiosk for the protection of caravans, and from the minaret of which the sea was visible. Here the headman of the robber Turkman escort, given me by the Pasha of Adana as the best security for passing through the dangerous country unmolested, requested me earnestly

not to leave the caravanserai before the sun rose, as in darkness he could not be responsible for the consequences. The reason was that had marauding parties of his own people been lying in wait amongst the dwarf bushes of the steep hill-sides commanding the pass, he would not have been able to make his presence known. All these fertile plains are wastes of tall grass; no one dares to cultivate them, so great is the insecurity. We saw herds of gazelles, wild boar, hares, partridges and francolins. From Koort Koolak began the descent of Karanluk Boghaz (the Defile of Darkness). Descending gradually betwixt hills covered with small brushwood of ilex, myrtle and pomegranate, we came to a narrow valley, at the bottom of which ran a brook hidden by cane brakes and bushes; this is the defile so notorious for robbers, and heaps of stones by the wayside marked the graves of the murdered. Three hours brought us to Demir Kapu (the Iron Gate). Here, where the jaws of the gorge were narrowest, a massive stone gateway had been thrown across, now in ruins. When I started, foreseeing the possibility of an attack, I gave orders that no guns or pistols were to be fired until the whole column should be thoroughly clear of the ravine. I then allowed the caravan to precede me along the narrow path, and took up my station with a few resolute horsemen in the extreme rear, as should an attempt be made I thought it would be to try and cut off the hindermost animals. The line of march was necessarily very long, as only one beast at a time could get past. By the time I reached the centre of the defile I heard a distant shot fired in front, then another, and another. Making sure that robbers had attacked the head of the column I rode on as fast as I could with my men

past mules and camels, at the imminent risk every minute of being pushed over the edge of the ravine, until I reached the mouth of the gorge. Then to my anger I found out that, in spite of my express orders, the leaders, in their delight at having passed in safety, were exploding their guns right and left.

Immediately on leaving the Iron Gate we debouched upon the sea beach. The atmosphere was excessively hot and oppressive, a sensible vapour of peculiar odour filled the air, and at nightfall there was a heavy dew; this part of the coast is pestilential. Eighteen miles further on we reached Piyass,¹ a scattered village amongst cornlands, which had once evidently been a place of importance. Passing through the vaulted passage of a large fortified stone edifice built across the road, and containing within itself fort, khan, mosque and college, we came to a stone bridge over a small river, and pitched our tents for the night. Next day, marching along the shore, we came to Iscanderoon, or Alexandretta. Half-way stood the ruins of a castle which once guarded a causeway running over a rocky and wooded point (the Syrian Gates). The town, which consists of two or three consulates, some stores, and a few miserable thatched Turkish hovels, lies at the foot of the Beilan Pass, and on the border of the swamp. It is, of course, excessively unhealthy and hot, but the roadstead is good. Vessels lie in safety, and pretty close to the beach.

¹ Once celebrated for its pirates, and still bearing an evil reputation.

ANTIOCH, 8th September 1856.

DEAR MARY,

At Alexandretta I left behind some of my invalid soldier escort to embark for England; and on the 3rd rode up to Beilan, a straggling village built among crags and rocks, through wooded passes for some three hours. Three hours more brought us through a fine amphitheatre of hills to the fresh-water lake of Ak Denghiz¹ (the White Sea), and passing the ruined castle of Bakhrass, on one of the lower mountains to the west, we encamped at Karamoot Kkan, a fortified enclosure and village like Koort Koolak. Skirting the lake we arrived here.

Entekieh, or Antioch, is on the bank of the A'asy (the Rebellious River) or Orontes, and the plain over which we rode had the appearance of having been flooded; much was left untilled, but corn had been grown in parts, and scattered fields of millet were still unreaped. The position of the town is strong. In front flows the A'asy with a swift current and a treacherous bottom, crossed by a single bridge of stone, and torn by huge water-wheels. In the rear rises a precipitous ridge crowned by an old castle, from either side of which descends a curtain wall down to the river's brink. A good deal of this was destroyed by Ibrahim Pasha, who used the material to construct very large barracks and a palace. The former is now only a shell, having been, it is believed, purposely fired by the inhabitants to prevent the Porte quartering troops there, as had been intended. Riding round the circumvallation of ancient Antioch I remarked a line of massive buttresses

¹ The eel fishery in the lake produces a large revenue.

in rubble stone, and an oblong building of the same with double wall, recalling to mind somewhat the building at Tarsoos. Thence I traced the broad line of the wet ditch which surrounded the walls, and I went up to the chapel of Mar Yohanna (St John), taken possession of by the French as St Peter's. Entering by the gate of St Paul I turned up the ravine to the Iron Gates, where a massive barrier had been thrown across the ravine, connecting the two rocky hill tops by a curtain wall which came down their steep sides. The view of the stern ravine, the massive masonry, and the ancient tower was very fine, and towards the entrance to the ravine we had the whole *enceinte* of the old town, now a sheet of orchards, and the site of the Turkish town spread out before us. The plain here contracted, and gradually entered low hills which continue to the sea.

After the auction on the 6th I rode with Mr and Mrs Morgan to Beit al-Mai (Daphne), about three miles to the south. On our way we passed the ruins of the barrack built by Ibrahim Pasha, capable of containing several thousand men, and further on were the remains of an aqueduct, several arches of which were still standing. On approaching Daphne, the road to which is rough and stony, the country breaks into pretty hills towards the west, through which flows the Orontes. We crossed a small river and entered on the site of Daphne; groves still remain in the shape of mulberry plantations and orchards, but laurels are scarce; there are many more on the north side of the town near St Paul's gate. Few remains exist, a little tessellated pavement, some fragments of granite columns, and several hollow columns in a vineyard; the two great sources of water are still cased in masonry.

*DAMASCUS, BRITISH CONSULATE,**5th October 1856.*

DEAR MARY,

Whether I wrote to you from Aleppo I don't know—I had a great deal of work—but I don't think I did. The road from Antioch to Aleppo was very uninteresting; leaving the town we wound round the chain on which stands the castle, and on reaching Djisir el-Hadeed (the Bridge of Iron) crossed a fine stone bridge over the A'sy, skirted rich cultivated plains, and encamped at Yeny Sheher (the New City) a small village on a small river. Next day we marched over a dreary country and rough stony roads, and here we first met with groups of wells cut in the rock; they are carefully filled during the rainy season, as there are no springs, and the water is sold to passing caravans. The soil was red, the fields of great extent, millet, cotton, castor oil and sesame.¹ A march of four hours next day took us to Aleppo. The castle, built on an elongated mound, appeared suddenly before us, and as we approached the line of the ridge under which stands the town, its masses of houses and gardens opened out; a blue veil of mist was wreathed amidst the trees and added to the beauty of the picture. Mr E. Barker, the English Consul, who entertained me most hospitably, his dragoman, and a large escort came out to meet me, and a company of regular troops was drawn up by the wayside. I paid an official visit to Hamdy Pasha and called on the military Governor, Agmi Pasha, at the barracks: fine large buildings. As he was

¹ The castor oil is used for lamps, the sesame oil chiefly for cooking.

not there we went to his house, and passed close to the castellated gate of the citadel, a handsome edifice of early Mohammedan style, and then by a group of ruined mosques, reminding me of Cairo near the mosque of Toolun Sultan. We then went to the bazaars ; they are of great extent, wide, and vaulted in stone, extremely well supplied with European goods, and the flooring smooth and level. We passed several Khans ; the entrance gate to Vezir Khan is very handsome. In the evening I went to Yussuf Pasha's pavilion in the gardens. The whole was illuminated and the lines of light across the large reservoir of water had a fine effect.

Aleppo, where I disposed of the Mesopotamian camels and the rest of the animals, thus closing my official mission, is the best built, best paved and cleanest town of Asiatic Turkey, and I greatly enjoyed my stay there. Many of the native Christian girls spoke French, and others who did not were in society, as nearly all the residents amongst themselves speak Arabic. There was a *soirée dansante* at Yussuf Pasha's, one of the great men of the place of old family. It was given in the gardens ; in front was an immense basin of water, an oblong some thirty yards long, called Bahr, or Little Sea ; across it were suspended many lamps, which were reflected brightly from its surface. Unluckily we had no European music, as Agmy Pasha, the military Governor, being at feud with our host, had refused the regimental band. The native musicians, however, played polkas and quadrilles after a fashion, and our host's nephew and son, Ali Pasha and Kadry Bey, danced with the ladies. Kadry Bey spoke French perfectly. Much more, I believe, is to be made of the Arabs than of the Turks. The fête was given in

honour of Count Bentivoglio, the French Consul, brother-in-law of Waleski and a nephew of Poniatowski, an Italian, and a very gentlemanly-looking man. Finally, having despatched my escort to Alexandretta, I left Aleppo on the 24th September as a private individual, with ten horsemen of my own. The road was monotonous; stony hills, bad cultivation, wells yawning all over the roads ready to engulf the unwary traveller, fortified khans and villages, an abandoned waste of desert, and troops of gazelles flying, now in graceful bounds and now stopping to gaze at us. A rough road brought me to Khan Tuman, a ruined walled town on the Aleppo River, where there is another military station. The road as far as Damascus skirts the desert and is exposed to the attacks of the Bedaween, especially of the great tribe of the Anizeh. I left at four A.M. and rode over a level and well cultivated country; olive trees began as we approached Sermin, where there is another military station, and grow all over this neighbourhood; on the way we passed many villages and one ruin, noted as a waiting place for robbers. Leaving at four A.M. I passed Dudikh at half-past five, a well-built village with a minaret, and in another hour I came to Khan Issebbeel, a walled khan in ruins with a few adjacent hovels; the road was mostly stony, over ground alternately cultivation and rock. At Māāra, a large village of 500 houses, with two fine stone khans and a handsome square minaret, was another military post, showing the great insecurity of the country. I rested for a couple of hours, and then, over the same grey limestone rocks and arable land, went on to Khan Sheikun, a miserable looking village; many of the houses were sharp cones and

like beehives. It has a large khan and an abundant supply of water, said to be derived from the A'asy, and there are large reservoirs to receive rain water. The place is built at the foot of an artificial mound, out of which large hewn stones are dug. Three hours from Māāra is a village called Bārā, where bas-reliefs and inscriptions are said to be found. On September 26 I left Māāra at four A.M., and at six reached a ravine, a resort for robbers. About two hours later I passed Taify, a village with a ruined mosque, said to be a shrine of Imam Ali, where nearly all the houses were conical in shape. From the village of Kam Khaly we began to see Hamah,¹ and the green lines of gardens lining the valley of the A'asy. At Hamah the river was beautiful. It rushed through the town, past banks fringed with fine trees, and was barred across by great dams of masonry, which served as bridges. The confined waters were thus formed into wide placid lakes which, escaping through narrow sluices, turned great water wheels, lifting the water to aqueducts of stone forty feet high, and then racing down to another pool formed by fresh barriers. The water itself was alive with men and boys washing horses and sheep, and bathing. The great wheels revolved with almost musical sounds, scattering a thousand rainbows in the sunbeams. The upper pool reflected trees and city in its smooth, dark surface, unbroken save by the leaping of fish in pursuit of flies; the life and rush of the stream in the sluices formed a picture I shall not forget. Next morning I left at five, and, riding over great cultivated levels, reached the valley of the A'asy, flowing east, in about

¹ The ancient Epiphania, an early colony of the Phœnicians.—O. T. Hamath.

three and a half hours. The river was dammed close under a Saracenic bridge of black basalt to turn a mill attached to it on the south bank, where stood also a fine khan with corner towers, now in ruins. On the hill above was the village of Rastan, with good houses, seemingly built for defence. Crossing more level country we passed, on an artificial mound, the large village of Tell Biz, with conical roofs to its houses, which reminded me of pictures of African kraals. At noon I entered the walled city of Homs.¹ Its citadel, now in ruins, was on an artificial mound at the back of the town. Some of the bazaars were very high and vaulted in stone and tolerably well furnished, and the streets were well paved—the work of Ibrahim Pasha, who also constructed the large barracks out of the material of the citadel, which I ascended. The mound had been entirely faced with slabs of basalt and surrounded by a moat, the escarpment of which had also been a solid wall, but little remains in any state of preservation; a gateway, some portions of the wall, a square tower or two of massive construction in pudding stone, a vaulted room, and many smaller chambers or vaults, some situated immediately under the others. Indeed, the whole of the superficies of the mound is covered with such chambers, and it is remarkable that at a time when shells must have been unknown all these vaults and domes were covered with

¹ The ancient Emēsa. In Strabo's time the residence of independent Arabian princes. Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus, was born here, and Elagabalus, who exchanged the high priesthood of the celebrated temple of the sun of his native city, for the imperial purple, and the emperor Alexander Severus. It was the scene of the decisive battle between Aurelian and Zenobia, A.D. 273.

a layer of earth several feet deep. Two wells supply water to the fortress, which has been constructed out of still older remains, as was shown by the number of small basalt columns worked into the masonry, many of which I saw also in the city. In the night an expedition of 600 Bashi Bozook started against an Anizeh chief who had been levying large sums from the villages, and had defeated a party of the Bashi a few days before. A thousand men were to co-operate from Damascus, and more were to join from Hamah.

I left at four A.M. for Shimshaar, a walled village now deserted, and passing to the east of the A'sy a broad sheet of water, said to be dammed to retain a supply of water, saw immense herds of gazelles of the white species—they flecked the plain with white. The road was level, but the country was now a desert. On the way I passed the small ruined village of Shissheer, also walled, and at nine reached the village of Hassia and encamped in the ruined enclosure of Ikee Kapulu Khan (the Two Doored Khan). Next day I started at a quarter to three in the morning over hilly, stony ground, passed Davar Khan, a small fortified khan with a few houses attached, and continued over similar ground to Kara, a large village with fine gardens, and before ten I got to Nebk, opposite to which, to the west, lay Nebroud, a large place with bazaar, etc., and a good many Greek Catholic and Syrian inhabitants; they told me that Baalbek was twelve hours away to the west. Long before dawn I was in the saddle, and passing the village of Kastal went through a defile, and turning east debouched into a small plain where was Khan Getlhi and reached Taify, which I left next morning at three A.M.

Crossing over a ridge and going through a gorge which took a considerable time, at last I entered the plain of Damascus, dotted by villages, environed by trees. For some miles we rode among great olive plantations and vineyards, and then came to dense orchards of poplar, apricot, walnut and other trees. In this country the fruit trees grow thirty to forty feet high! At last a minaret rose from amidst the trees, followed by a cupola and a few houses, and next moment we were under the green windows of Mrs Digby's house.¹ Through the Bab Mez al-Kassab (the Gate of the Butcher), we entered the bazaars, high and wide, but nothing to those of Aleppo; these are covered with wood, branches and matting; those of Aleppo were arched in stone. Out of the bazaars we turned into narrow lanes, between mud-plastered houses, to the low, unpretending door of the British Consulate. Passing through a small outer court of no pretensions, we entered into the harem court, which at once burst upon me in its manifold beauties. It is forty-eight yards long by thirty-six wide, paved in tessellated marbles; on one side is a tank twenty paces by ten, flanked by a *parterre*, with a bower of vines and a fountain in one corner, and opposite is another fountain. Here and there out of the marble grow great loquat, mimosa, orange, lemon and pepper trees,² myrtles, roses and oleanders. On one side of the court is the open apartment called a *leewan*, forty feet high, with the line of the arch festooned with passion flowers and Indian honeysuckle; on the other side of the great basin a

¹ The divorced wife of Lord Ellenborough, generally known as the Honble. Mrs Digby, married to the Sheikh of Palmyra.

² *Schinus molle*.

double flight of stairs leads to the private apartments, shaded by a trellis of jasmine and verbenas shedding perfume all around. Up the sides of the court clamber red bignonia and roses, their long arms sweeping forwards and downwards. The finest rooms open from the leewan. One has a high dais at one end and a fountain in the midst of the lower part; the walls are covered with coloured Saracenic geometrical patterns, pilasters of carved stone and marble, gilt and plain, run upwards; diamonds of verd antique, covered with glass, alternate with pieces of mirror, slabs of white marble inscribed in verses of gold from the Koran, a roof blazing with gold in low bas-relief and colours in bouquets and zigzags, form a whole more easily imagined than described. On entering the court and the room, I considered myself repaid for my ride. I have since seen many beautiful apartments, but no courtyard equal to this. In it I breakfast and dine on a carpet and amuse myself by feeding the two geese and the gold fish in the great reservoir. Above me rises the lofty square minaret of the mosque of St John, once the belfry; on it, saith the Mohammedan tradition, the Messiah is to descend when he again revisits earth, and from it the call to prayer is chanted by four voices from the four points of the compass, their wild notes commingling in upper air. I did not know what it was at first, as I had never heard anything like it before in the East, although naturally the usual cry of the Muezzin, "La Allah il-Allah wa Mahommed er-Ressoul Allah" (There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Messenger of God) was most familiar to me. On the first night of my arrival the light of the full moon was so brilliant that the roses and jasmine on the trellis outside my open window cast

black shadows on the tessellated pavement, and I lay awake for some time. At length I fell asleep, and then heard, in a sort of dream, an unaccustomed sound floating through the air, and for some time failed to realize what it could be. At last I remembered where I was and listened to the wonderful voices rising and falling, as in addition to the usual chant, they admonished their hearers that it was better to pray than to sleep.

The bazaars are full of life and crowded by women, as in Constantinople. The Jewesses, and many of the Christians, show their faces, and the Muslim women cover theirs with coloured handkerchiefs, so fine that I frequently see all their features. I had heard much of the beauty of the Damascene Jewesses, but although I have seen many, having visited all the chief families here, besides those I met in the streets, I was disappointed. One handsome woman I saw at Aleppo, and a daughter of the chief man here is beautiful, but she is the only one.

I went to the bath, the cleanest and gayest I have met with in this country, then I paid a visit to Maxime Outrey, the French Consul; his room was a perfect *bijou* of carving and gilding and colour. In one room, over a fountain, was a ceiling about forty feet high, of old Persian painting, an exquisite piece of work. Then I called again on some of the Jews, Daood Harrari, in whose house Père Thomas¹ is said to have been murdered,

¹ Père Thomas was a Capuchin friar attached to the Propaganda Fede, who worked chiefly among the Jews with whom he was a great favourite. He suddenly disappeared, and portions of his remains were reported to have been found in a sewer in the Jewish quarter. It was said that he had been last seen going into the house of Harrari, so it was assumed that he had been murdered—very possibly from motives of jealousy. The matter was taken up by the French Consulate, France being the recognised

and Shahade Lisboona, whose house is a new one built chiefly of white marble; the designs are wrought out in gilding and mirror, and the courtyard is surrounded by an upper gallery of glass which had a good effect.

The rides round Damascus are very pretty, lanes shaded by trees with rills running at their roots, and fine cattle grazing in the lucerne fields, and I saw in many places old columns built into the walls or used as gate-posts.

Next day I called on Mrs Digby (whilom Lady Ellenborough), who after, I believe, marrying a German Baron, and then a Greek, and building a fine house at Athens, has finally espoused an Arab, Sheikh Midgwell. I was surprised at her choice, for he is not one of the noble featured, tall, graceful men so frequently met with amongst Bedaween. He is short, with an immense nose. She is of full figure, brilliant complexion, stately port, and has well-opened crystalline eyes into whose depths one can gaze, dark hair and plenty of it; across the upper half of her forehead she wears a thin white muslin veil—quite transparent—just sufficient to give an Eastern look, otherwise her dress was a fashionable one, figured black silk, open at the breast with bars across, the name for which I do not know, with a profusion of nice white frilled lace. Her boudoir was white and gold and mirror, furniture of Buhl, armorial tapestries, handsome paintings

protector of Catholics in the East, and strong measures were taken, through the Turkish Governor, against the Jewish community. The notorious old story of using Christian blood in their religious rites was again adduced against the Jews, and a terrible persecution ensued which cost the lives of many. It was then that the English Government, on the initiative of Sir Moses Montefiore, interfered, and orders were given to British Consuls throughout the East to protect the native Jews when unjustly attacked.

in rich frames, corner settees of dark velvet and gold. In her bedroom, on a dais, was a glorious tent-bed, crimson and gold. Her toilet table had a profusion of trinkets in Bohemian glass and gold. She is rich for here—£1500 a year. Then she took me all over the English garden she has created, mazy walks, terraces, rustic bridges, shady bowers, and her stable and lodgings for her pet poultry, and at last into her grand drawing-room, where she opened her portfolio of sketches and water-colour drawings. There were views of Switzerland, and other places she had travelled in, beautifully done; but what interested me most was Palmyra, a gorgeous assemblage of column and arch, with a foreground of orange-groves and date-palms. I quite long to go there, but it is an excursion which would occupy too much time, besides being very expensive. I should not have objected to her being my guide, for she is clever and very accomplished. At last the evening prayer floated down from the tall minaret, night was sinking on the city and I had nothing for it but to take my departure, and received an invitation to come as often as my stay would permit. This I am sorry to say is too short to allow of my repeating, for to-morrow I start for Baalbek, the Cedars and the Lebanon.

BETROOT, 11th October 1856.

DEAR MARY,

Yesterday I arrived here. From Damascus I rode over the mountain ridge behind it, and soon came to the green valley—a line of orchards—of the Barrada (the

Pharfar of the Bible) ; I tracked up the stream for nearly four hours by narrow paths along the steep sides of the southern hills, and passed at the head of the valley through the chasm, pierced with rock tombs, which the river had cut for itself in the cliffs. Here we crossed a small bridge and entered into an upper valley, through which the Barrada ran in a succession of falls, until we came to a cascade of three leaps. Skirting round the hills we left the Beyroot road and went northwards, through the valley of Zebdany, full of vineyards and mulberry groves. Here we slept, and next morning, following the valley which had shrunk to a ravine, came to a small village. Cultivation was restricted to patches amidst rough rocks and stony hill-sides, and after some hours we entered a narrow gorge and turned to the west ; debouching on low hills, and passing through the village of Baalbek we encamped inside the temple. At the first glance I was disappointed. The stupid guide brought me so that nothing was seen of the temple until, from amongst the wretched hovels of the village, I saw the columns above my head. Since then, on leaving, from the plain I could admire and understand the effect it still presents at a few miles distance, and what it must have been in its glory, ere the design of its exterior had been spoiled by the walls of the Saracenic fortress which now masks its base. Besides the large temple there is a smaller one, and another very small circular temple and the remains of a covered fountain outside. Amongst the lines of the Mussulman castle walls are numerous fragments of other temples, amongst them I found two bassi-rilievi—one of a griffin the other of a horseman. The quarries are five minutes to the west ; the great monolith is 66 feet by 15

wide and deep, many of the great stones had been prepared, and the monolith raised from its bed and three sides dressed; it was tilted up on end to the south and the dressing had been commenced on both sides. Three of these great stones are built into the upper course on the west, they are 57 feet long and under them are six stones, and under these again are layers of smaller stones. The northern side has an outer wall of very large stones, and the whole is raised on vaults open at either end. No traces are now visible of a staircase, but I apprehend there was one to the east, and another to the platform behind the smaller temple. The columns of the smaller temples are composed of two pieces of 15 feet each, irrespective of pedestal and capital; those of the large temple of three pieces, while those of the circular temple are monoliths. Scattered about were portions of Sienite columns, although none appear to have been used in the edifice. The interior of the great temple, and indeed of the second also, has been divided into aisles formed by huge buttresses, probably to support a roof. Cornucopias are frequently introduced, and human heads in medallions amongst the tracery of the roofed spaces between the columns and the temple, and also in the niches, which have alternately a head and a shell. The winged globe also appears, and on one side of the great entrance of the small temple is a flying figure. The cornucopias on the central stone, or key, and the stone on the other side are defaced, the under surface, which bore a sculpture, being broken off as the key-stone has sunk from its place. Next morning I left at a quarter past five and passed through the plain of Bekāā, and after a mile passed some Sienite columns set in a circle, with stones roughly placed

as a frieze forming a small temple. There were villages on both sides. In four hours I passed Beir Khaneh, then Nouri, Jelyi, Tibuin, Ubla Furzul, Karak, Malakah and Zahlé with 2000 houses (5000 musketeers) all Christians. Karak, Malakah and Zahlé are placed in a ravine.

The Lebanon I am truly disappointed with. To the Cedars I did not go. But I have seen quite enough not to regret this, as everyone tells me it bears the same features everywhere. The roads are infamous, calculated to destroy any animals, and I walked the greater portion of the distance. The whole width of the much vaunted chain of mountains is only twelve hours slow travelling over bad roads. There is no real grandeur of scenery; grey rocks, the uppermost regions scantily sprinkled with small bush, and lower down stone pines in thin order and a few miserable oaks. What there is to admire is the patient skill of the inhabitants, who have covered these barren cliffs with amphitheatres of narrow terraces in every possible place, some of the steep embayed slopes were quite pretty—a succession of regular steps planted with vines and mulberry trees—while hamlets and villages of detached cottages, some built of mud white-washed, others of hewn limestone, met the eye everywhere. Each hill top was crowned with a church and belfry, and to me the effect of the bells in these mountains was very peculiar, as nowhere else in Turkey are Christians allowed to use them. But the pass of the Taurus at A'ala Dagh was infinitely more grand and beautiful, its snow-covered sharp crags, its deep valleys, its endless woods of thick pines and terebinths, the chasm of Kulek Boghaz, and the varied forests of the lower ranges, its oleanders and myrtles, throw the Lebanon far into the shade. The

descent alone of the Taurus occupied me about [★]double the time of the whole passage of the Lebanon. I saw no beauty among the women, and no horns—I mean of silver—it seems the Christians have entirely discarded them, and only a few are still to be found among the Druses. A fight had taken place at Zahlé between two of the leading families. Seven men were killed and wounded and about as many women, for they fight too on these occasions, sometimes with fire-arms, sometimes with stones, and necessarily come in for their share of flying bullets. The village contains about 2000 Christian houses, mostly built of mud bricks, though some of the new ones are of hewn stone, with panelled doors and barred windows. The streets are narrow and filthy. I left next morning at five A.M. and went up through the village; the ground is laid out carefully in terraced vineyards and stony fields, many are not more than six feet wide. I crossed the summit and began descending into a wild, deep and narrow ravine of grey rocks thinly sprinkled with bushes. This lasted a long while until we reached a village, where besides vineyards were mulberry plantations; the houses were mostly mean, with flat roofs, but the churches were everywhere well-built of hewn stone. Continuing over similar rough ground, broken wherever practicable by the most careful cultivation, we passed through a second village, where pine trees began to appear—the stone pine with edible fruit. These increased in number, with lilac and purple heather, and rhododendrons. The mountains were terraced wherever possible, and the villages showed neat and white in the distance in every suitable ravine. At last we came to the large village of Bukfaiyā, the site of a conflict between Ibrahim Pasha and the Porte. Quite

at the end of the village, from a projection of the mountain, I had a panoramic view of Beyroot, its deep bay filled with steamers and ships, the winding Nahr al-Kelb (the Dog River), Djouny and other villages. Prince David Ismail, son of the Emir Haidar, came to salute me, and I returned his visit at his father's residence. Next day, I mounted at seven A.M., passing over a very rocky road in great stair-cases. In two hours I reached the Nahr al-Kelb, and crossing it by fording, mounted up a precipitous road through pine forests regularly planted, then came mulberry groves, olives and a few oaks. Entering another gorge I again reached the Nahr al-Kelb, and a few hundred yards lower down we came to the bridge. On the southern bank was an inscription relating to Cæsar Aurelius, and six Assyrian tablets all portraying the same king as well as I could make out, but they were greatly worn away and some were entirely effaced; the best preserved had a cuneiform inscription across the figure below the beard. In the sea, cast down from the cliff, is a bit of rock said to be the figure of a dog with the head wanting. I could make nothing of it, beyond that a portion had been cut off. In two hours riding along the beach I reached Beyroot. The bazaars are clean and well-furnished, and large suburbs are rising outside the town, where the hedges of the lanes and roads are all cactus. From the new barracks I had a fine view of the gardens, and then strolled along the beach and remarked the effect of the English bombardment on the walls.

There was a smart shock of earthquake in the night, which alarmed the few people left in the town. It was cool at night in the mountains, but here I find it hot, with sand-flies and mosquitoes innumerable. The Moores, like

most people, are up in these cursed mountains. What they do there I don't know, for walking is the next impossible thing to riding, and they must keep entirely to their houses. I should hang myself in a week were I condemned to such inactivity. While waiting for the steamer, and the sale of my camp furniture and horses, I walked to the pine woods, planted to prevent the sands from the south encroaching upon the town; many gardens had been overwhelmed, and only the tops of trees could be seen standing out of the midst of sandhills.

JAFFA, 26th October 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

I believe I told you I was to leave Beyroot on the 13th. Next morning we were off Caifa to land the French Consul-General. On our beam was the plain of Esdraelon through which runs Kishon to the sea. Carmel towered over our bow, beyond was the Castle of Pilgrims, astern were the white batteries of St Jean d'Acre—coupled with other associations of days of chivalry and the wars of Napoleon, not the least to me was that John had gained there his first medal. In the afternoon we landed at Jaffa, built on a small hill and recalling Malta, with its stone edifices and balconies. It is a dirty place with steep streets, surrounded with gardens of palms and oranges. On board I made the acquaintance of Mr Graham, a clever Cambridge man, who having been secretary to the Church Missionary Society at Jerusalem

had naturally made the sites of Holy Writ a study. We went on together to Ramleh, a small Arab village with a large mosque and Khan, and many old tombs and buildings proving that it once was a place of some importance, and remained the night at the Latin convent of Arimathea, leaving next morning at five. For four hours the road lay over the plain of Sharon which extends as far as Gaza, and then we reached the hills of Judæa—the Lebanon in miniature—through these we passed by a rough rocky road. The cultivation was much neglected; the hills had once been covered with terraces, now only in part maintained, on which grew olives, figs and vines. On the way we passed a village, the residence of an Arab Sheikh of some importance, where were ruins of a Roman building and a Christian church in good preservation. Then we came to Kirjath Jearim, where David killed the Philistine. The Jews were to the south side of the valley, the Philistines to the north; it is now filled with vineyards and orchards, and through the midst runs the dry brook whence David is said to have taken his pebbles. After ascending the last hill, we saw the Greek convent of the Holy Cross to the south, and further on that of Elias, the Mount of Olives north-east, and presently Jerusalem itself, looking much like other small walled Turkish cities. And now my dear sister I am going to be wicked—it may well have been called a land flowing with milk and honey, for it is only suited to goats and bees. Imagine the Sliema¹ cliffs and the rocks about fort Tigné,¹ magnified into mountains, severed by ravines and occasionally covered with a copse of ilex, and you

¹ In Malta.

have Palestine. The roads are infamous—smooth ledges of rock, rough pointed cliffs, and rolling torrents of round stones—it needs a Syrian pony to be carried in safety. All the good people at Jerusalem swear there is no such fertile country in the world, merely to try and bear out the words of Scripture—thus it is that men often warp the truth unconsciously to support a pet theory. Sometimes they say it must have been much less rugged, but has been altered by volcanic action; while there is not a volcanic rock nearer than the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, and that was the land of Moab and Ammon, and the Lord only knows how many more Philistines. But Judæa is composed of limestone and freestone, and therefore cannot have undergone any volcanic changes.

Mr Graham was an excellent cicerone, and Jerusalem I found very interesting. The Holy Sepulchre created in me anything but a sense of reverence—it was a huge toy shop. Under that ugly black dome and its sister white cupola have been cleverly collected the centre of the world, the grave of Adam (who by the by planted the tree of which the cross was made), the site of the crucifixion, the place where the body was laid and the tomb of Christ, and also the rock which was reft when the veil of the temple was rent. Now it so happens that this rock is Egyptian Syenite, of which not an atom exists in this country; it is peculiar to Upper Egypt, and an Italian engineer who made a careful plan of the Holy Sepulchre, has discovered that it is a mass of skilful masonry!! The whole thing is wrong. It never could have been the site of the crucifixion, for we are told that the place was

“nigh unto the city,” and again, “the watch came into the city”; consequently it was outside. Now the city had three walls, with a large population between each. Had it even had but one, if you draw a line, as Josephus tells us, from the tower of Hippicus on Mount Zion to the western cloisters of the Temple, the present site must have been within it; for after giving space for the pools, Herod’s palace with its great gardens, etc., no room would have been left for the population. There would not have been space for five thousand souls, and Josephus says it contained two and a half millions at the time of its overthrow by Titus. This must, however, have been a gross exaggeration, giving the circumference of the city the greatest possible extent compatible with the strongly marked boundaries described. The valley of Jehosephat with the brook Kedron which winds round its northern and eastern sides, and the valley of the Son of Hinnom, or Tophet, on the south, and the western side, taking in the full extent of mount Zion and drawing a line to the brook Kedron, never, in my opinion, could have held above a hundred thousand souls—and what is more, the country could not have fed them. Taking this view of the case, the Holy Sepulchre would have been in the centre of the city and within the first wall. So there can be little doubt but that the whole is a fabrication of the monks; they did not even study Josephus, a contemporary writer, or the site of Jerusalem, or the gospels, which declare Calvary to be out of the city. The place was probably at the eastern side of the town near Kedron, which was the easiest way out from the hall of justice, adjoining Fort Antonia and the temple. The dwellings

of the Knights of St John is now a receptacle for unutterable filth. Then I went through the Via Dolorosa to the barracks; from the roof I obtained a perfect view of that noble building the mosque of Omer; thence passing out by St Stephen's Gate, inside of which is the pool of Bethesda? into which the angel descended to trouble the water, and which is quite dry and fast being filled up with rubbish. I walked down into the valley of Jehosephat to the place where St Stephen was stoned, to the tomb of St Mary and the garden of Gethsemane—all within a few yards of one another and under the Mount of Olives; then to the tomb of Absalom and crossing the valley again I reached the Arab village of Siloam and came up by the walls by the gate of Zion to the Jaffa gate.

We rode one day all round the imaginary boundary of Jerusalem as destroyed by Titus, and came on patches of masonry, seemingly of the old walls; across Kedron, up towards the hill on the north, from which we got a lovely view of Jerusalem; on to the mount of Olives, hence to Bethany, sweetly nestled in a hollow of the hills amidst olives and vines. Here is shown the tomb of Lazarus, and also the ruin of his house—if it is, beggars in those times lived in strong towers. Then we wound round through the valley by which Jesus is supposed to have ridden into Jerusalem, and crossing the neck of the Mount of Olives, the city opened out into another beautiful view—*viz.*, that of “he beheld the city and wept over it.” We descended to Kedron, past Gethsemane, now a horrid little enclosure with a white wall round it and divided into *parterres* with walks! close by is the

place where St Stephen was stoned. St Stephen's gate was shut, and we rode up the valley of Jehosephat, the sun was setting in clouds of crimson and shed a flood of the brightest gold upon the Mount of Olives on the right—it was one of the finest things I have ever seen. Next day I went round the walls from the Jaffa gate to that of Damascus, and visited the Wailing place of the Jews, the ancient masonry in the walls of the city, David's tower, and the Temple supposed to be Jewish; it may not improbably be Roman and is precisely similar in its appearance and the dressing of the stone at the edges, but not in the centre, to that of Baalbek. Near the Mekemeh (tribunal) I saw a fountain, now dry, very elaborately ornamented. What was chiefly remarkable was a star formed of columns and arches, their bases rising from an ornamented circle, another curious ornament on the door of the Mekemeh was taken from the leaves of the Doum palm. In the valley of the Tyropeon I observed the spring of the arch which is supposed to have connected Moriah with Zion. In the afternoon I went out by the gate of Zion to the pool of Siloam; descending the western side of the valley of Jehosephat, we had opposite to the south the Aceldama, or Field of Blood. The pool is small and a very small rill of water was barely trickling into it. Thence southwards we went to Er-Rozel, or Well of Job, a very deep well covered with ruinous low domes; on one side is a tank and a large trough for watering cattle. Ascending the valley to the north and passing under the village of Silwan, situated amongst the rock-hewn Jewish tombs, we came to the fountain of the Virgin, or the King's, or Dragon's pool, which by an underground tunnel supplies the pool

of Siloam. Above, far up the bank of the ravine is a well; I observed another above the Pool of Siloam, these may perhaps all derive their common source from the conjectured reservoir beneath the temple of Solomon.

The following morning I called on several people, among others on the Patriarch Vallerger, whom I had known years ago at Mosul, and on Kiamil Pasha, and had a fine view of the enclosure of the mosque. Afterwards we rode out by the Jaffa gate over western Zion, to the presumed sites of forts Hippicus, Phasalis and Mariamne, to the rock tomb of Helena; then across the valley of Kedron, up the face of the opposite hill, whence I got a beautiful view of the city.

On Sunday the 19th, I went to el-Artus—the *hortus inclusus* of Solomon's song "a garden enclosed is my spouse," rough grey rocks wall it in, and fertile enclosures watered by a small spring occupy its bottom, in which grow pomegranates and other fruit trees. Out of the Jaffa gate I passed under David's tower and across the valley of Hinnom by the lower pool of Gihon, over Tophet and the Aceldama up by the hill of Evil Counsel. Then by the house of Caiaphas and the tree on which Judas hanged himself, over the plain of the tribe of Benjamin by the convent of Mar Elia (St Elijah), where tradition says the Prophet slept on his way, the rock becoming soft to him as a bed yielded to his body and so the impression remains, and then by the tomb of Rachel. Thence to the right of Bethlehem, leaving to the left in the distance the Jew's mountain, where their last stand was made against the Romans. On the right was the Frank mountain, a curious truncated hill, where the crusaders held

out against the Saracens after the fall of Jerusalem. Entering a narrow ravine I reached the house of Mr Mashullah who gave me coffee and showed with pride the fertile gardens he was cultivating. Next day I left for Bethlehem where, at the Latin convent, I was shown the stable where Jesus was born, the manger, the tomb of the Innocents and of a dozen saints, and then two hours over rough roads and barren mountains brought me to Mar Saba. The first one sees of the convent are two high watchtowers, built by the Turkish Sultans as a protection against the attacks of the Arabs. Mar Saba is built against, and up, the wall of a deep ravine, it is very large and the different straggling portions are reached by open flights of stairs. Some of the chapels are very ancient as is shown by the remains of frescoes on the roofs, and of tessellated pavements. Many of the pictures and some of the bells were presents from Russia. I saw the grottoes in which St Jerome translated the Bible and those of St George and of St John of Damascus, and they told me the church was one thousand three hundred and fifty years old. The prior was dressed like the other monks and was carrying firewood, he makes no distinction for himself in dress or labour. Quantities of birds of the rock-thrush genus—*petrocincia*¹—were here in a half-tamed condition. They flew from the rocks around to be fed on raisins and bread, and are of a purplish black, with black bills and feet, russet-coloured outer quill feathers, about the size of a blackbird, and known in Syria as “bul-buls.” I was exceedingly well entertained by the monks, who

¹ A friend learned in ornithology tells me they are a species of grackle (*gracula*) commonly called mynah.

received me in a very nice guest-room and gave me good food. Next day I started at two in the morning and reached the Dead Sea after some four hours' ride just as the day broke. The road over those hard mountains and along the sharp ledges and precipitous slopes was, by the faint light of the late moon, an excellent preparation for reaching so dread a spot—a plain once so fair—that had been riven and rent by volcanic fires, extinguished only by the bitter waters of a sea that blighted the soil it touched. But there was not quite the often described absence of vegetation (with the sole exception of that famous apple, a species of *solanum* of which old travellers relate such amazing stories), for I rode through a jungle of tamarisk, desert thorn with its ripe black seeds (when immature and bright pink they are eaten by the Arabs and have an astringent taste), reeds and rush so dense, that we were unable to make our way, and had to turn back and try another path. The wet sand all round was imprinted with the tracks of hyenas, boar, porcupines and foxes. The Sea, a narrow lake of the deepest blue, stretched away into a hazy horizon; from its eastern shore rose the dark line of the mountains of Moab and I stood beneath the barren crags of Judæa, with the water coming rippling up with a crisp murmur in tiny dimples of brilliant clearness over the shallows. The wash of its waves in angry mood was shown by a line of large drift-wood—sometimes whole trees—uprooted no doubt by the Jordan in its spring floods. To bathe I was not much inclined, as I thought a ride with clothes saturated with salt under a hot sun, would not be pleasant, so I contented myself with dipping my fingers into its waters to taste

them—which produced an unpleasant contraction of the throat, only temporary of course. I waited till the sun rose over the hills of Moab and then rode on to the Jordan. At first for the space of a mile all was wet sand, then commenced camel's thorn, cornel trees, etc. The whole valley was very peculiar; a great layer of level soil occupied the wide space, often flooded as shown by the curled white blisters which covered the deep rich loam into which our horses' hoofs sunk, and at the base of the mountains the soil had been cut into the most extraordinary shapes—squares and cones. I saw at once that Jordan had played many pranks in this curious valley, and had often changed his swift course, sometimes cutting his way here, sometimes there, and assisted by his tributary freshets from the hills, had formed this fantastic accumulation of isolated hillocks. On reaching the river its appearance fully bore out the idea I had formed. We saw what seemed to be a serpentine line of low, light green copse and canes, and on coming up these proved to be the tips of great poplars, etc., which thickly fringed either bank of the stream, lying deep down in a bed of alluvium forming high straight walls on both sides. On the western they were falling with sullen plash into the chalky waters which came racing by, seemingly intending to return again to what I think is their old channel by Jericho and the hills of Judea. The sea itself is, I am persuaded, gradually being silted up at its northern end by the detritus borne down to it. Well, although I do not at all think that Jordan is in the bed it occupied 1800 years ago, I descended to it at the spot where pilgrims devoutly believe that the baptism of Our Lord took

place. It was a charming place, above it formed a wide pool, below it contracted, and the confined waters rushed eddying through their narrow bounds. Trees with gnarled roots formed a border of lace, and their boughs hung sweeping over the sacred stream, whose waters were so chalky and opaque that I hesitated to bathe in them. But to be at Jordan and not to cleanse myself from my manifold sins and come out even as a little lamb was absurd, so in I went, and the surprise was delightful. The water was quite warm and wonderfully soft, and I found I could swim up stream into the great pool, where I filled my bottle from the centre of the current. As a picture it was beautiful—fit for the pencil of a Stanfield.

I left the Jordan and rode through a waste of jungle and large cornel trees, loaded with blossom and fruit, on which grew a most luxuriant mistletoe with dark green leaves and panicles of long scarlet flowers hanging down, which I took to be a separate tree. The cornel apples were fine and large, and are edible. All about Jericho grows the wild egg-plant, which only requires cultivation to become an excellent vegetable; this is generally thought to be the apple of Sodom and supposed to be poisonous. Were security ensured, I think the whole valley to the sands of the Dead Sea might, by a judicious use of the Jordan, be turned into an extremely rich country. We had a couple of sharp showers, the first rain I have yet had on the road, though I saw a little rain at Kaisariah, at Damascus, and at Bukfaya in the Lebanon.

While riding through the jungle towards Jericho we came upon a Bedaween on foot, hiding, and lying in

quest of prey. I had four horsemen with me, and galloping up we made him prisoner and led him away for about half an hour; it was slow work, so we turned him adrift and kept his arms. The whole place was very insecure, as we learned on reaching the old watch-tower of Jericho, where was stationed a party of irregular cavalry, who told us that the preceding evening a body of Bedaween horsemen had carried off two hundred sheep and goats. So I was too late by a few hours for a serious adventure, as I suspect that had we met these gentry we should have had to ignominiously run before them. I was the best mounted of the party for I had a good mare, and could have held my place in a *sauve qui peut*.

We stopped for a couple of hours with the Bashi Bozook and at mid-day left and immediately began ascending. The road passed over the foundation of substantial stone buildings, and I passed the ruins of two aqueducts, while a ruined tower at the base of the mountain crowned the whole. The rock had been dug into at its base to render it less easy of access, and I found the road, the work of the monks, excellent, carried through rough barren mountains. The last hour in from near Bethany was the worst, paved with large pebbles. I was four hours riding it at a good walk.

Next day arrived General Chesney, Sir John Macneill and the officers of the *Stromboli*, and together we visited the mosque of Omer, built on the site of the Temple, and that of Al-Aksa, formerly the church of the Virgin, built by Justinian. Under separate cupolas are the judgment seats of David and Solomon, and the place where Solomon sacrificed a ram. Christians have

only lately obtained admittance to these fanes which are held in the highest reverence by Mussulmans. The Sakarah, or centre rock under the dome of Omer, in which stood the Holy of Holies, is second, in their eyes, only to the Kaaba at Mecca. Here I felt touched; I stood on the undeniable site of that temple where a true religion had been held for so long a period, and whence three great religions had gone forth, all still held in reverence. The present building must greatly resemble the old temple. Here is the great platform overhanging the valley of Jehosephat and Kedron, the outer court surrounded, as of old, with cloisters. The second court is raised above the outer one while the fane itself is higher still, and within it stands that upraised mass of rock which is held so sacred, and which it is reasonable to believe was the site of the Holy of Holies, as we know it was the highest point of the whole. The Muslims, with better taste than the Christians, have merely girt round the rock with an ornamental railing instead of covering it up with marbles, and thus leaving its reality in doubt. It may be that this, being a positive site, while the other was a created one, obliged the different treatment; at all events the mosque looks much more like a place in which to worship God. It is very dark, and the light comes in subdued through the most exquisite coloured glass. The beautifully shaped dome is covered with gold mosaic, and every portion of it is encrusted with the elaborate detail of Saracenic work; the exterior is of coloured tiles.

The Mohammedans, too, have their fables. They show the imprint of Christ's foot on the rock where He stood, the seat where He sat and taught His disciples, His cradle

in stone in the vaults of Al-Aksa, the seats of Solomon, of the archangel Gabriel, and of a host of other worthies. But leaving these aside, interest is attached to every step of that quadrangle. From the wall of the Temple across the valley is to be extended the bridge of cord by which Moslems are to reach heaven. On the wall is the very seat on which Mohammed will seat himself on the last day, while below Al-Aksa is Tophet, in the valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is to be the scene of the Christian judgment; and a similar belief prevails among the Jews. Afterwards we went to the Holy Sepulchre, saw the tombs of Godfrey of Bouillion and of Adam, and the tombs of the Kings, *i.e.* of Helena, Empress of Adiabene.

Thence I reached the lowest of the great tanks, called Solomon's Pool. All this was a barren district, and then the country began to be open, fields girt with stone walls, and the soil red, just like Malta. But ilex and arbutus grew thickly, and the hills looked pretty with their patches of arable land. I forgot to say that opposite Bethlehem I passed the tomb of Rachel, greatly revered by the Jews. It has all the appearance of a Mohammedan "turbah," or domed tomb, and it may be one without invalidating the site. As we approached Hebron the country was covered with vineyards, and it was a pretty change to their autumnal reds and yellows after the dark green of the ilex. Hebron is embowered in a wood of olives; it is divided into four quarters all down the valley. Many of the buildings are clearly of high antiquity, and a great mosque of ancient structure covers the tombs of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, and Leah in the cave of Machpellah, which is in a Mohammedan sanctuary of considerable anti-

quity. The masonry is of bevilled stone with rough centres, similar to the tower of David, and of the kind called Roman. No Christian has ever been allowed to enter, so holy is the site deemed by the Moslems. In the town are arched bazaars, and being Friday there was a great concourse of people. Many of the buildings were very old, as was shown by their material and strength, and on the western side of the south entrance to the town stands the supposed oak of Mamre, under which the angels sat on their way to Sodom and Gomorrah, as they rested by Abraham's tent. I have some twigs of it, and some of the acorns, although I confess that I do not believe in the tree. On my return I came by the Upper Pools of Solomon, very fine works, capable of containing an immense supply of water; it was defended by a square fortified Saracenic enclosure. I was $11\frac{1}{2}$ hours in the saddle, and naturally visited all the other sites: the Pool of Siloam, Er-Rozel, whence Jonathan sent to David to warn him against Absalom, Tophet, the caves of the Kings, etc.

I only arrived here from Jerusalem this morning, and as my baggage animals were extremely bad, I left them behind and rode on alone. Close to Ramleh, where I slept, just as the dusk was coming on with heavy rain, I marked two Bedaween on horseback in front, whose appearance was suspicious. I was at a canter, steadying my sword with my left hand, so changing the bridle at once, I kept the right hand free. Just as I overtook them they drew up to the left and ordered me to stop. Both were enveloped in cloaks, so I could not see what arms they had, excepting a gun across the bow of one saddle. My pistol was in my hand in a second, and, sweeping round, I pre-

sented it full at the chest of the man who had the gun, and a high wind blowing aside my cloak, showed the steel scabbard of my sword. I did not say a word, but was determined to drive a bullet through him if he attempted to lift his gun. Luckily they were staggered by the quickness of my movements and did not come on, so I moved slowly forwards, ready for whatever might happen, until I was safe from a rush from behind, and then, giving my mare the spur, rode straight into Ramleh to the Latin convent. Soon after I quitted my Bedaween I met a patrol of cavalry, sent for the express purpose of maintaining security during the annual migrations of a Bedaween tribe; so I told the commander what had occurred, and that my baggage was somewhere on the road behind.

I am now waiting for the steamer to Alexandria, and shall be with you in Malta before Christmas, then I shall return to Samsoun to wind up accounts with Guarracino.

SAMSOON, 28th April 1857.

MY DEAR MARY,

It is seething hot here—burning southerly winds—I quite long for rain to refresh my plants, and the temperature also. Guarracino takes away nearly all our stable with him to Crete, and gave me no peace till I let him have my Aleppo Arab for his wife. I think I shall ask him to buy me a thorough-bred English horse at Constantinople, I must take a good horse to Egypt. We have just signed the deed of separation by which Guarra-

cino, Ross & Co. ceases to exist from the 30th April. When I have wound up everything I shall go to England and then come and see you on my way to Egypt.

[The above is the last of the letters to Miss Ross. In 1857 Mr Ross became a partner in the house of Briggs and Co. in Alexandria, and three years later he married Janet, the eldest daughter of Sir Alexander Cornwall Duff Gordon. They remained in Egypt until 1869 and then settled in Italy, where Mr Ross was at last able to indulge his passion for flowers, and became known as an enthusiastic cultivator of orchids.]



W. H. R. S.

EPILOGUE

THERE is about some people an atmosphere of romance which arouses interest and attracts, without its being quite possible to determine exactly what causes us to place them in a different sphere to their neighbours. Even when quite a child, knowing nothing of his career, this was what I felt about my uncle, Mr Henry James Ross. He came to visit my parents during one of his summer visits to England, and I remember him walking rapidly across the lawn—he never moved leisurely—holding in his hand a red coral necklace. I was so very little, and his tall, slender and alert figure had to bend low down to get a good look at his small niece. His face, thin and bronzed by constant exposure to an Eastern sun, had a slightly stern expression, enhanced by the wearing of an eye-glass; but a kindly smile lit up his eyes, and the gentleness of his manner banished from me all sense of timidity. Then, some years later, when he came to see me at the *Sacré Cœur*, the feeling of romance about him deepened in my eyes, for had he not come from Italy? Among us there was a girl who had once been to Rome and seen the Pope; from that fact she had become a heroine to us. But here came one who actually lived in the enchanted land, and eagerly I listened as he walked through the convent grounds telling the nun who accompanied us, about his Florentine home and the orchids he grew in the hill-set villa garden. A few years

later it was my privilege to live with my uncle and aunt near Florence, which they had made their home for some thirty years. I learnt to know him first, not as one who had spent all his youth in the East, but as one who made his own the life of an Italian country gentleman, yet keeping heart, sympathies and character most purely English.

Poggio Gherardo, from the time Mr Ross purchased it some fourteen years ago, became a meeting-place for English and Italians, residents or travellers. Everybody of whatever profession was sure to find bonds of sympathy with people of such wide interests as both the *Padrona* and *Padrone* of Poggio Gherardo. My uncle dedicated himself to the cultivation of orchids with the enthusiasm he brought to bear on anything he undertook. Hours were spent every day with his Tuscan gardeners repotting and examining the precious plants, and watching eagerly for a sign of colour in the buds of a new prize among the flowers. To be taken through the orchid house by him was to realize to the full the pleasures of gardening.

Besides the plants to be cared for and watched, there were numerous small animals who waited anxiously for his early morning visit, and the platter of food he never failed to bring them. There were the pheasants, the red-breasted dove, a large white cockatoo who was always described by the peasants as “un vero Cristiano” (a perfect Christian), so wise did he seem to them in his ways and sayings. And then came the parrots, Paraguayan and Australian, large Maremma dogs, guinea-pigs; and, last on my list of pets, but first in my uncle’s heart, the tame nightingale who lived in the drawing-room, coming

out every afternoon after luncheon to sport on his master's shoulder, often flying on his head or getting entangled in his beard. Even the gold-fish knew his footstep, and rising to the surface of their pond on the terrace would wait for a daily gift of wafer; wonderful Burmese fish they are, from the royal tanks of Mandalay, with triple tails spreading out behind them like a lady's chiffon train, as they skim lazily in and out among the pink and blue water-lilies. Animals and flowers all thrive at Poggio Gherardo in a remarkable way, because much love is lavished on everything within its walls. The wisteria grows at such a pace that it threatens to pull down the terrace staircase; the camphor tree and eucalyptus battle valiantly through severe winters, and rare southern plants are enticed to show their bloom. As for roses, they tumble in great cascades over the walls above the carriage drive, mixing their pink and white blossoms with the yellow banksia and pale and dark blue irises. Away from the wall the monthly roses form thick hedges winding up the hill towards the house, near where they merge into a spinney of pines, chestnuts, cypresses, bays, laurels, vines and arbutus. Above it all rises the square crenalated fortress villa which withstood the arms of Hawkwood and his Pisan soldiers, survived even earthquakes, and after more than five hundred years still stands proudly on a spur of the Fiesole hills full in sight of the Arno valley.

My uncle, though so much taken up with his Italian villa pursuits, and going at such rare intervals to England, never lost his keen interest in men and in the political events of the day. Politics had always been a great hobby with him; and his extraordinary memory enabled him in a discussion with anyone opposed to his way of

thinking, to quote, for example, a speech Mr Gladstone had made some fifty years ago, quite astonishing his opponent, who would be thrown off his guard by my uncle's firm grasp of events so long past. This energy of mind shamed one. If there was anything requiring explanation my uncle was at once applied to for help, and if he happened not to know, which seldom occurred, he never allowed the question to rest until he had ferreted out the desired information.

In his seventy-fifth year he seemed as young as any vigorous man of fifty; but repeated attacks of influenza completely broke down his health, and he was forced to lead the life of an invalid; during the last two or three years quitting his arm-chair only occasionally to go into the garden on warm days. It was during these latter years—years which for most people would have been times of mental lethargy—that the full charm of my uncle's personality, and the treasures of his mind, seemed to show forth more perfectly. Instead of the duty of entertainment falling upon us, he it was who kept all intellectually keen and interested. Now that the body rested, having done with *active* life, his mind, always vigorous, became still more the dominant power in proportion as the physical force diminished. It was Mr Ross the invalid, imprisoned in the house for most months of the year, who supplied us with the news of the world's doings. "Well, what news, Mr Ross," was a usual opening of conversation by our friends who would stroll in for a talk, from their villas near by. The last political article he had read before anyone; Mr Chamberlain's speeches he knew almost by heart, and there was not a river, town or hamlet in South Africa, or a fight or

skirmish which had taken place, even at the beginning of the war, which he failed to know all about. A friend wrote to me from England: "How is your uncle—that wonderful old man? I think of him seated in his arm-chair by the window, the nightingale perched on his knee, and the world's news on the tip of his tongue."

He had the rare quality of making one feel less dull, more intelligent and more worthy of attention than when in the society of most people.

I must not write too long a tribute to one who only had to be known to be thoroughly appreciated, but one more point I wish to touch on before closing. It has only been the privilege of a few friends to listen to my uncle's tales of Eastern life, and those who have not heard him can hardly realise what a remarkable power he possessed of bringing a scene before his audience with the precision and rapidity of a real artist. Many have been the tributes to my uncle's powers as a story-teller. The following letter from our friend Mr R. C. Trevelyan, which he kindly allows me to quote, will show how vivid was the impression made upon him at the time.

"... There was about your uncle's story-telling a very rare harmony of delightful qualities, seldom found together nowadays. In the first place such adventures, in themselves so novel and romantic, could not fail to enthral, however told. But told with his perfect yet unconscious art, they were enhanced, as it were, to Epic value, made vital with an almost Homeric beauty. Every event was presented with that vivid preciseness of vision, which is the life of all great narratives, from the "Iliad" to "Robinson Crusoe." The outward images of men and things, the splendours and squalors of Oriental cities,

types of mankind, Bedaween, Turk or Koord, with their several costumes and equipments, would all be sketched with decisive touches: at the same time the human and dramatic interest would never flag. He could understand with imaginative insight, and impartially describe, the most varied characters and motives of men: he was sympathetically acquainted with the moral and conventional codes, the passions and the chivalries of the desert: and all or any part of what was still felt and remembered by him with such fulness and clearness, he had power to make real to his listeners. For the gift of simple, expressive language was eminently his. In the sustained and animated, if somewhat deliberate progress of his narrative, he would at times pause for a moment in conscientious search for the telling, the eloquent word, which he would never fail soon to find. Voice, manner and gesture were in perfect harmony with his language; and all these together gave his tales a convincing atmosphere of reality and truth, a result of that fidelity of speech to idea which is art's crowning triumph. Of exaggeration and embellishment, even had he been capable of them, there was no need. Like one speaking of what has passed but yesterday, he would be embarrassed, not by the meagreness of his matter, but through its vividness and abundance: at least he would give an impression as though relating a part only of the scenes present in his mind, artfully selecting the most effective details from the crowding treasures of a recollection seemingly infinite. Thus he was able at different tellings to vary and enrich the same tale with new incidents and fresh touches of colour; the best proof, not of a capricious memory, but of one capacious and retentive beyond the common.

"In the perfect balance of these intellectual and imaginative qualities, which are needful for the complete genius of the narrative spirit, I have never met with his equal—except perhaps in our veteran pre-Raphaelite, with those fascinating recollections of his brethren in their first years of hope and power, and of his own later life of varied Oriental adventure. The East has ever been the acknowledged mother and nurse of fiction. May it be that there still the spirit of story-telling resides, with which our over-civilized Western intellect has need of actual bracing contact, to be refreshed, invigoured and re-inspired."

The quick determination of my uncle's mind, his calm, wide outlook on men and events, together with a keen insight into the character of Orientals, and a love of everything beautiful upon the earth, made his talk of unique interest and charm. It was his habit to show a fine contempt for poetry, at least for most modern poetry, or any form of literature of an indefinite nature. "Oh these philosophers, poets and artists," he would say with a sweeping gesture of the hand and a shrug of the shoulders, but with just that twinkle in his eyes which caused us to delight in his most downright criticisms. Men like Lord Stratford de Redcliffe "the great Eltchi," Mr Cecil Rhodes, or Lord Kitchener, appealed to him; and in this he had a quality akin to an Oriental. "He was a *male*," he would say when describing some man whose character he had admired in bygone days, using the Eastern formula of allusion to a man possessed of force of will and backbone. My uncle had not that strength himself which overpowers and masters one by any outward show of force. His strength belonged rather to that of a

quiet, determined nature, wearing a gentle, courteous manner. The Orientals he came in contact with felt that he was an upright man whom they could trust, but who meant to be obeyed, though making no fuss to obtain the mastery, because he knew too well his own powers to mistrust his influence.

Yet, with my uncle's professed scorn of poetry, he was often himself a poet. I shall never forget his talk one evening when he told us of a ride from Mosul to Baghdad. After thrilling us with a graphic account of some incidents of the journey, he came to the part where he endeavoured to give us some impression of his own sensations on first seeing the city. There came a pause in his eager flow of talk as if now, after all these years, he was once again reining in his horse while gazing out across the magnificent stretch of country before him—"The roofs of Baghdad were of gold," said my uncle; and there was something in the way in which he led up to the climax of the description, and in the intonation of his voice, together with the gestures of his finely-shaped hands, which caused us to perfectly realize the picture he had in his mind and wished to convey. He had also the power of bringing to us the atmosphere of a place and his own sensations on arriving at a village at earliest dawn, when not a sound stirred among the slumbering inhabitants save the echo of his horse's hoofs upon the roughly paved streets. Perhaps the finest story, as far as narrative power went, was the one related on page 118, when he recounted the scene where the angry Koords, baulked of their prey by the interference of the Koordish women, seated round the watch-fires in the square, were consulting in low, rough voices as to what revenge they could take on my uncle

and his friends. We all felt as if the scene was actually occurring. So vividly did he describe their anxiety lest the noise of the messenger's cartouche sling should be heard, as he slipped away from the house to ask for protection from the Koordish chief, that we all heaved a sigh of relief as the clink-clank of the chains seemed to die gradually away. My uncle surpassed himself one night, and his audience remained spell-bound. Mr Bernhard Berenson, our friend and neighbour, was one of the listeners, and I remember how he turned to me at the end, saying enthusiastically, with a sigh of satisfaction as of a thing enjoyed: "Well that is Epic—it is Homeric." Then, as my uncle rose to say good-night, we came suddenly back to the ordinary conventionalities of life, and he seemed surprised that we should have been so moved by the tale he had related. For a moment he paused in the doorway, a tall figure, now bent, leaning on my aunt's arm; and looking back at us, he said, with a smile of amusement, yet with a certain sadness in his voice: "I could not ride seven hundred miles in a week to-day," and he disappeared down the long corridors of the villa.

The old rooms echoed with these tales of Eastern life. Often as my uncle sat in his low arm-chair, his hands moving before him in unison with his talk; a table covered with books and flowers by his side; Cecco, the nightingale, close by; and a circle of friends about him, I often thought of another group of story-tellers and listeners. It is now more than five hundred years ago that the gay company of youths and ladies wandered up the slopes of Poggio Gherardo, and seated among the terraced-gardens and ripening vines, recounted each their tale in

view of plague-stricken Florence. The past and present do not clash here. The grey walls are the same, only greyer, and the tower is more battered than in the fourteenth century. Through the barred windows we look at Brunelleschi's dome and the convent and tower-crowned hills of the Arno valley. While within the lofty rooms of the old villa, if the tales related were no longer of the loves of Italian ladies and the tricks of wily, quick-witted Florentines, at least we listened to stories of human interest and romance. By a happy chance the old traditions of the place lingered on in the spirit of story-telling, now almost passed away, and were upheld with renewed charm by the first English owner of the Boccaccian Palace of the Hill.

L. D. G.

